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ANNA KOURNIKOVA TENNIS, FIFA 2000, JONAH LOMU RUGBY, VICTORY BOXING 2 AND MORE! PlayStation

Official

Australian

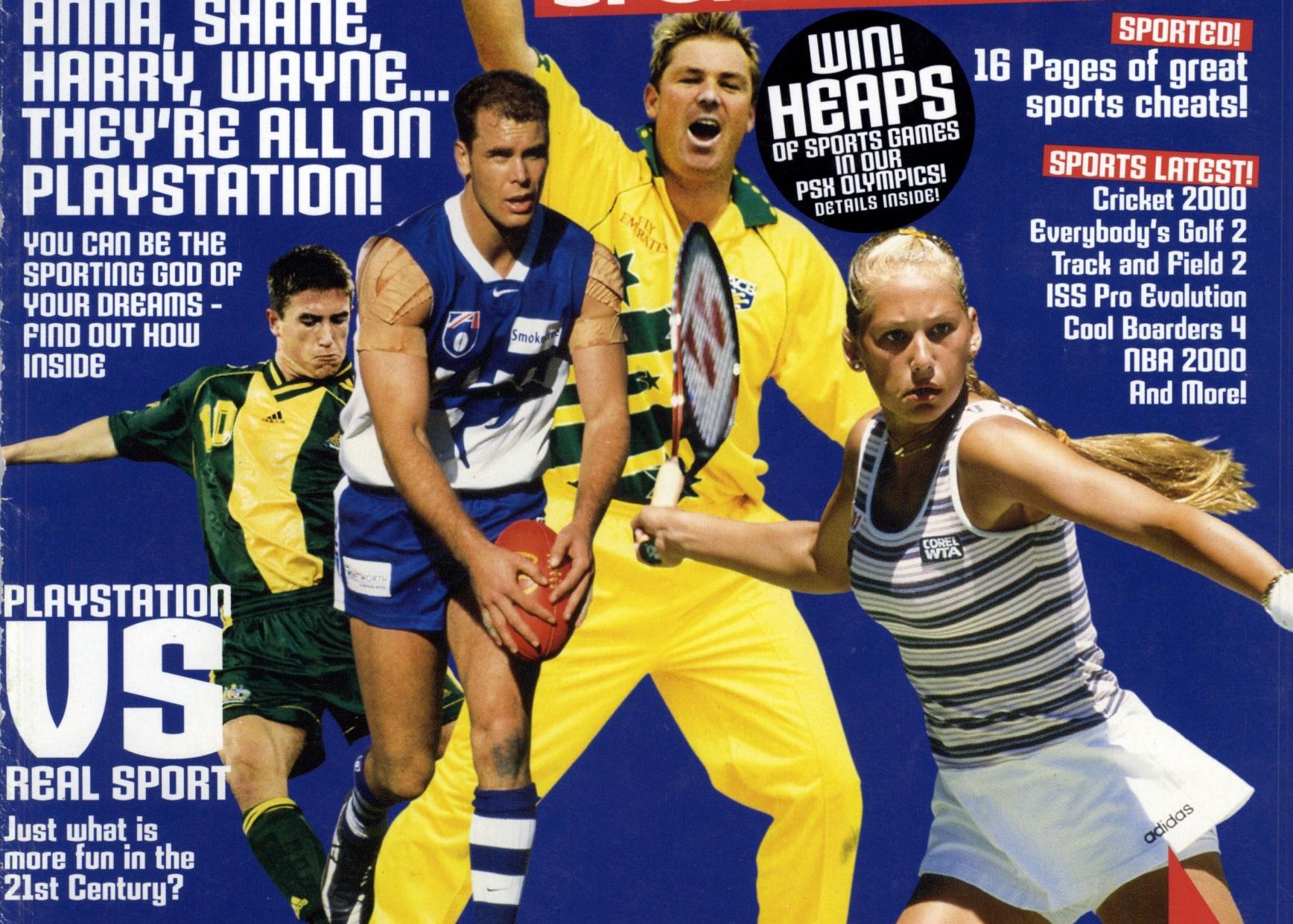
PlayStation

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SPORTS SPECIAL

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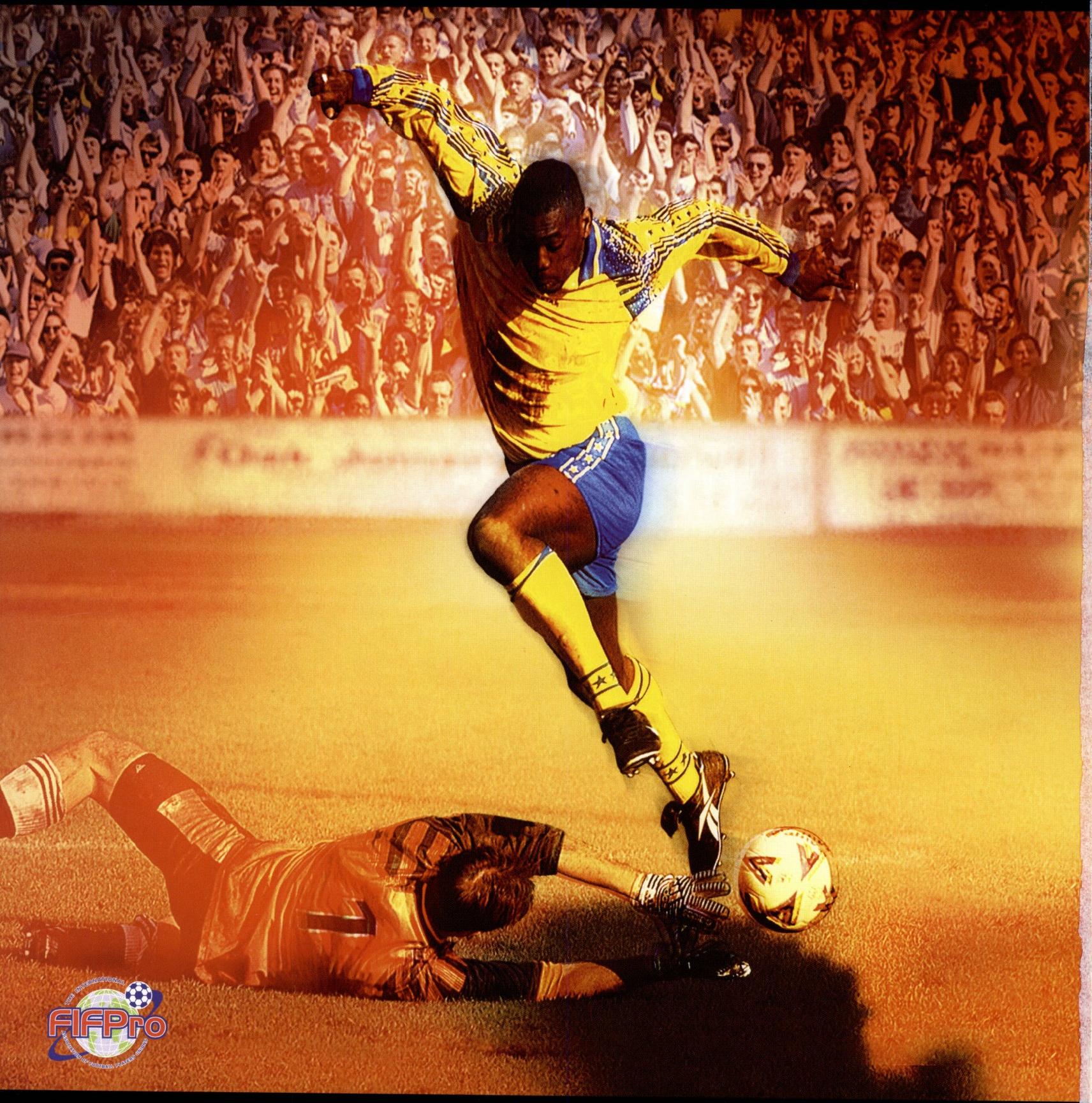
JUST BOUGHT A PLAYSTATION?
TURN TO PAGE 83 FOR OUR COMPLETE A-Z OF SPORTS GAMES

ACP



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04



**DO NOT
UNDERESTIMATE THE
POWER OF PLAYSTATION**

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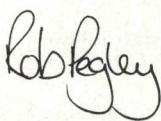
If you worship PlayStation
get the bible

IF YOU'VE BOUGHT THIS MAGAZINE THEN there's a pretty big chance that you're a sports fan. And that you love PlayStation. They're both fantastic hobbies to pursue. Even better is the fact that you can combine your two great loves at the same time. That's what this issue is all about: PlayStation sports games – the best ones to play and how to get the most out of them.

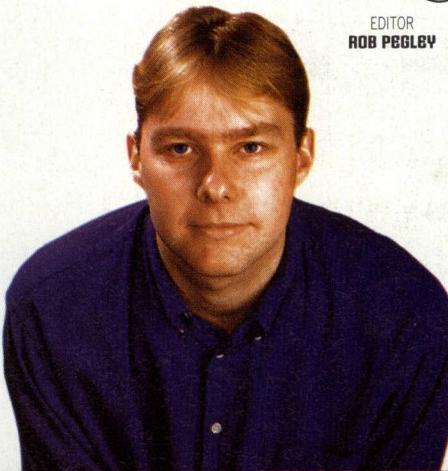
When you read the latest newspaper article accusing PlayStation of creating gun-wielding, psychopath loners, bereft of social skills, you tend to think that the person writing the article probably hasn't indulged in a two-player game of *Anna Kournikova Smash Court*. Or that they haven't played a few mates at *ISS Pro '98*, *Shane Warne Cricket* or *Actua Ice Hockey 2*. If they had then they'd know that PlayStation can provide all the fun, excitement, enjoyment and interaction that is found at great sporting events. And most of the games are at their best when you play them with friends. Nobody ever accuses Trivial Pursuit or Pictionary of subverting the nation's youth, when they're much the same battle of wits and skill.

No other genre on PlayStation provides quite the experience that a sports sim can. Like sport itself, it can provide drama and laughter, skill and opportunism, and it also pits one person against another in a head-to-head confrontation. Okay, so you don't sweat a great deal (although you can get a nasty blister with some soccer and athletics games), but you still have to have great hand-eye co-ordination, manual dexterity and a great understanding of the nuances of the particular sports you're playing.

As you'll see in this magazine the number of sports games available to PlayStation owners is amazing, and all of them have their own merits. It's a wide world of PlayStation sports out there. So like the company says, 'Just Do It'.

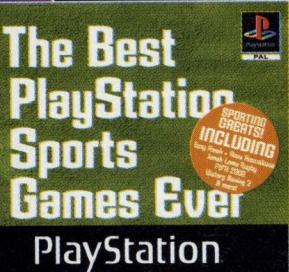
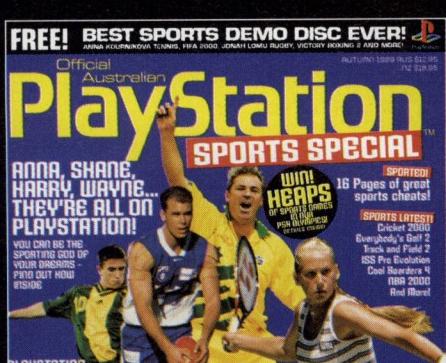


EDITOR
ROB PEGLEY



"Official PlayStation Magazine specials are Australia's most reliable source of PlayStation information"

and here's why...



We only use the most knowledgeable writers in Australia, with decades of gaming experience between them. It costs us more, but it means you get opinions you can trust. The games sweetshop is not our way. You pay peanuts, you get monkeys.

Despite carrying a guide to every PlayStation game, we only concentrate on the big titles in real depth – because they're the ones you're most likely to spend your cash on. At \$90 a game you don't buy that many, so it's important you get real value for money.

We only review the games that are already in the shops or just about to be released. It's so frustrating to wait a year to play something because a magazine has reviewed a bootleg copy from Japan. Very clever, but what good is that for the average PlayStation owner?

No game that we review is ever given the five-star rating unless it is still providing great entertainment at least a month after we started playing it – we want value for money, just like you.

And no game is ever included unless we've played the whole thing from start to finish. We hate those games that start well but fizzle at the end.

We don't try and dazzle you with technical jargon. We just give honest opinions in language that you can understand easily.

Our demo discs only contain the very best games. No other magazine can provide you with the same level of quality and entertainment.

Official Australian PlayStation™ Sports Special

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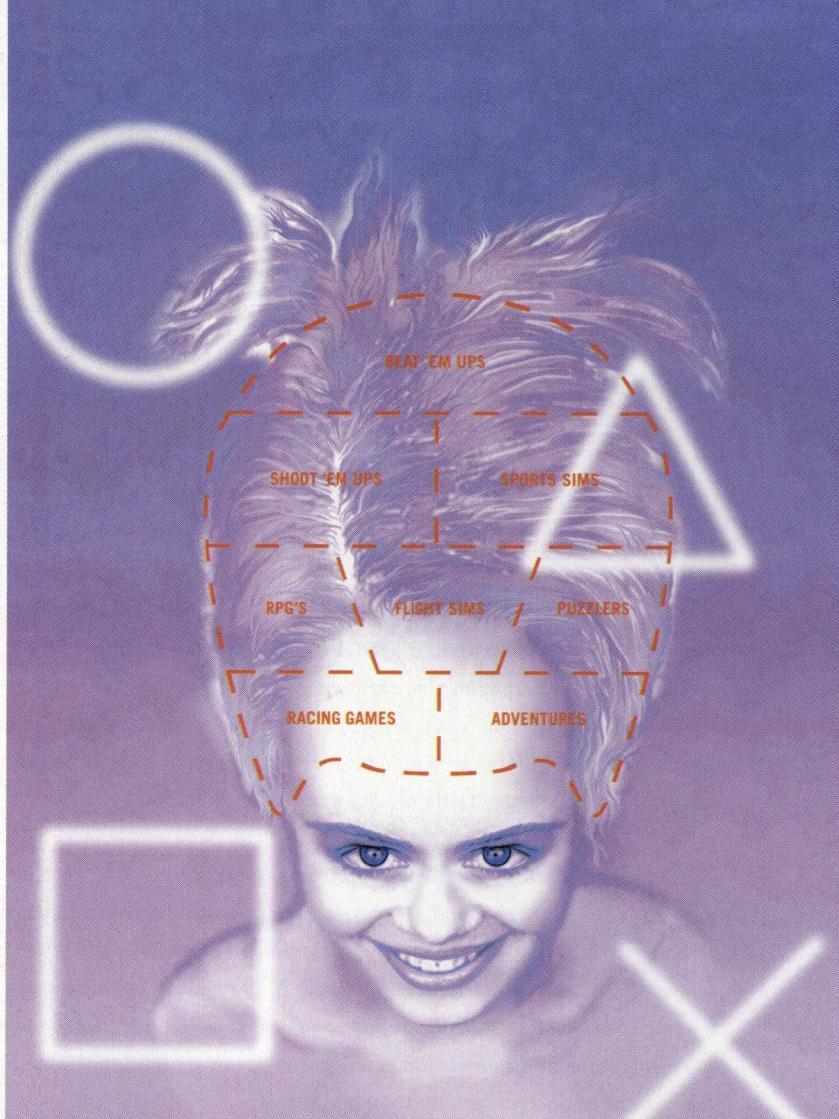
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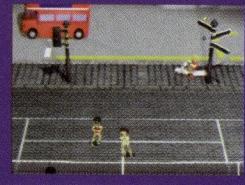
067 THE MIGHTY BRAIN

Every cheat you could ever want for a sports game.
Even a drugs' test won't catch these ones!

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The best tennis game you can get for PlayStation. And there's Anna of course...



050 Cool Boarders 3

Play it on the demo and then read more about this great downhill racer inside.



054 AFL '99

They said it would never happen, but Aussie Rules is here to stay on PlayStation.



058 FIFA 2000

The best-selling soccer game the world has ever seen - but is it the best?



062 Actua Ice Hockey 2

Ice Hockey has always been brilliant fun on PlayStation. We explain why.

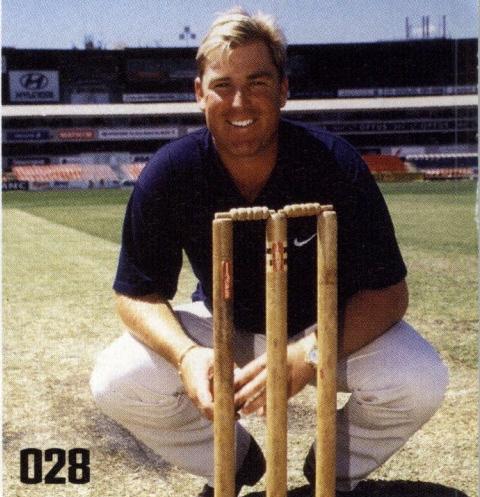
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We talk to some of the world's greatest sportsmen about their involvement with PlayStation, including Shane Warne, Lennox Lewis and more!



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Outside getting sweaty, or inside on the PlayStation - which is best?

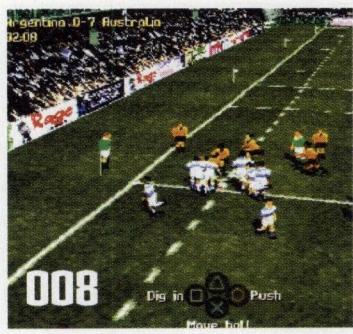
040 THE PLAYSTATION OLYMPICS

Great challenges to test your PlayStation sporting skills
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REGULARS

008 THE BEST SPORTS DISC EVER

The greatest collection of sports demos ever assembled.



008



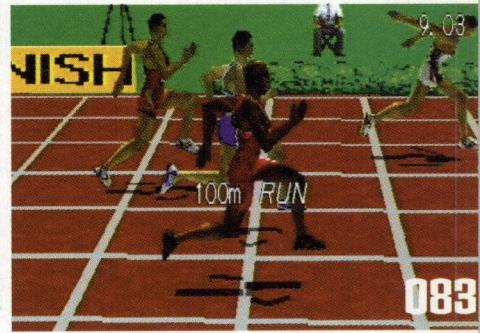
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026 PLEASE RELEASE ME

All the latest PlayStation sports games coming your way soon.



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At last *Shane Warne* has a rival, and we don't just mean Stuart McGill...



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The latest basketball game to hit the courts. We go one-on-one with it.

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The latest version of Sony's cool snowboarder series. Discover whether it's the best.



017 No Fear Downhill Mountain Biking

Another downhill racer, this time on a bike rather than on snow.



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Heralded as the best soccer game ever made. We put it to the test.



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With the Olympics on the way, what better way to get in some much-needed training.

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Not the biggest sport in Australia, but still a PlayStation game of promise.

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And to complete the '2000' theme, an update of an old favourite.

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The big surprise sporting hit of 1998 is back to do the rounds.

024 Prince Naseem Boxing

And the mouthy British boxer steps into the PlayStation ring at last.



your guide to...

THE BEST SPORTS DEMO CD EVER!

Play a set with Anna, scrum down with Jonah, spar a couple of rounds with Lennox and try tackling Ronaldo. All of

FIFA 2000

ELECTRONIC ARTS • SOCCER SIM

• PLAYABLE DEMO

EA often boasts "when it's in the game, it's in the game". Sadly, this is only true to varying degrees but with its offering of *FIFA 2000* soccer enthusiasts will be pleased with what's in store for them.

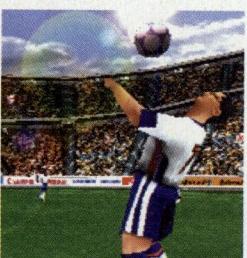
The full game features over 450 teams, including international squads, 40 classic teams and several major competitions such as the FA Cup, World Cup and the European Cups. Real players, including some of Australia's best exports appear (although don't expect their likenesses to be identical – especially with Mark Viduka's long, flowing locks!)



The demo sees you re-playing the first-half of the 1999 European Cup final between Manchester United and Bayern Munich. Top stuff from a great-looking soccer sim. **Challenge:** Try scoring a goal with Manchester keeper Mark Bosnich within the half. Believe it or not, this is possible.

Controls

- ▲ - Sprint
- - Shoot/tackle
- ✗ - Pass/switch player
- - Lob/sliding tackle
- R1 - Shield player



ACTUA ICE HOCKEY 2

ACTUA • ICE HOCKEY SIM

• PLAYABLE DEMO

Controls

- ✗ - Shoot
- ✗ - Pass
- ▲ - Speed boost
- - select nearest player
- Select - In-game options
- Start - pause

Actua Ice Hockey 2 really 'nailed it' when it came to capturing the fast'n'furious action of competition ice hockey.

You can choose to play as either the New Jersey Angels or the

Toronto Norsemen from the premier National Hockey League.

Scoring goals will be the least of your worries when you first pop on this demo, keeping your eye on the damned puck will be challenging enough!

Keep at it though, skidding around on a big lump of ice with a bunch of other beefy blokes has never been so much fun.

If this sim was any more brutal, you'd have a bigger collection of bruises than Tyson's sparring partners.

EDITED BY CATHERINE CHANNON



E-MAIL WORDS OF JOY OR (NO!) COMPLAINT ABOUT THIS CD TO PLAYSTATION@ACP.COM.AU. OR DIRECT YOUR CARRIER PIGEON TO *OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE*, 54 PARK ST, SYDNEY, NSW 1028.

these sporting possibilities are open to you with the greatest array of PlayStation sports games ever compiled!

VICTORY BOXING 2

JVC • BOXING SIM •
PLAYABLE DEMO

Here's one for the pugilists out there. *Victory Boxing 2* may not quite hit the mark in



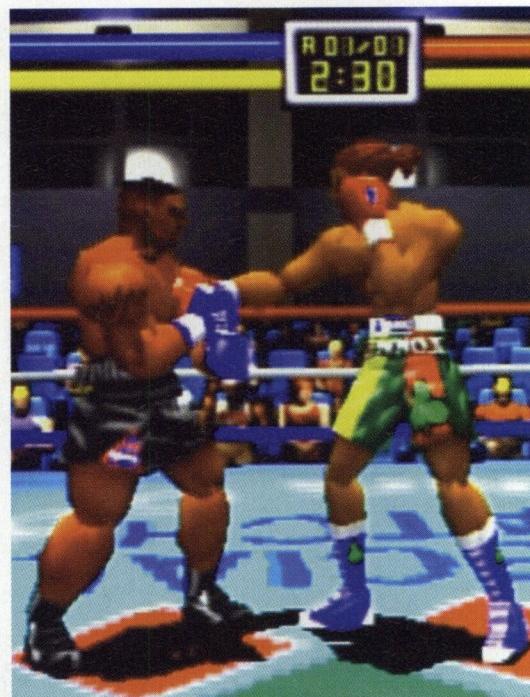
terms of gameplay, but it's good enough to release some frustration with some ol' biffo.

Avoid having your teeth knocked out by your computer opponent. Watching your two health meters at the top of the screen is crucial to your success.

The one on top shows how close you are to hitting the canvas and the lower one shows how far you have until you totally collapse.

The top bar will replenish over time, but what you start with on the bottom is all you have in the tank.

No Duran's, Ali's or Robinson's here though. You'll be playing as the fighter Lennox Hedges.



Controls

- - Guard body
- ✗ - Punch body
- ▲ - Guard face
- - Punch face
- - Sway
- RI - Special punch
- Start - Pause
- Select - Taunt

ANNA KOURNIKOVA'S SMASH COURT TENNIS

SONY • ARCADE TENNIS
• PLAYABLE DEMO

To serve press ✗ and just as the ball begins to lose height press ✗ again and you're away. Aces can be achieved using ● rather than ✗. Close to the net, you can volley with the best of 'em.

Yet another long and bawdy summer of tennis has passed us by, but we now have the delectable Ms Kournikova to keep our swings in check. The Russian darling of tennis slapped her name on this game last year, and surprisingly, came up with a smashing ace.

The little arcade sprites on-screen may not be the most detailed characters getting about,

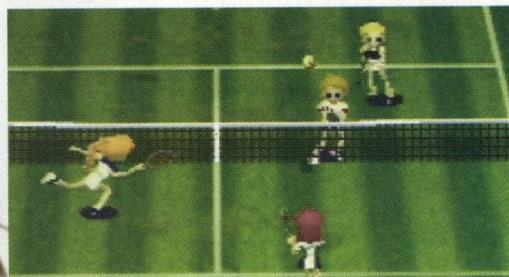
but the gameplay of this hit 'em up is surely top-notch.

This is a souped-up version of the original Namco classic, *Smash Court Tennis* and everything here is as sweet as eating strawberries and cream on Finals' day at Wimbledon.

Mix the gameplay and variety with a dose of competition with a mate or three, and you've got the best PlayStation tennis game around.

Controls

- ▲ - Lob (Auto serve)
- - Super shot
- - Strong shot (fast serve)
- ✗ - Weak shot (normal serve)
- RI - Top spin





your guide to...

THE BEST SPORTS DEMO CD EVER!



COOL BOARDERS 3

SONY • SNOWBOARDING SIM
• PLAYABLE DEMO

Controls

D-pad - Move board
● - Jump
■ - Sharp turn
R1/L1 - Punch right/left
R2 - Switch position
L2 - Slow descent

Throw on a few dozen layers of goretex, strap a single piece of fibreglass to your feet and throw yourself off the side of an enormous mountain. This is what you can look forward to when you take this silky-smooth *Cool Boarders 3* demo to the virtual slopes.

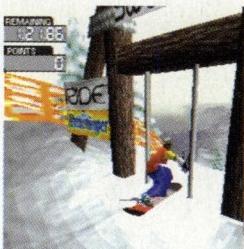
Not only will you exercise your boarding skills, this demo enables you to hone some boxing skills too!

Co-ordination and balance is required. Throw punches at three other computer opponents while hurtling down the side of the mountain at break-neck speeds. Opponent AI is particularly impressive in this mode.

The entire game has now made it into the

Platinum leagues and features 23 real-life boards as well as 30 runs on five varied international mountains.

Dare we say it? Very cool stuff.



Challenge: This demo is already quite testing without having the PSM team throwing any more challenges at you.

We will anyway, so take our challenge and try and punch out all three of the other racers at least once on your downhill journey. But don't forget to be the first over the line!



ISS PRO '98

KONAMI • SOCCER SIM •
PLAYABLE DEMO

ISS Pro '98 has been heralded as the premier soccer sim on the planet. This demo is proof of that and enables you to play as either Brazil or France – the teams from the '98 World Cup Final.

The demo supports two-player mode and

with regular training, you should be pulling off bicycle kicks and diving headers just like those flamboyant Brazilians.

Control freaks will even get the chance to play around with their team's formation. Bear in mind that once the game has started, you can only change formations and substitute players when the ball is out of play.

Controls

D-pad - Move player
L1 - Select next player
R1 - Dash
Start - Pause and game options
With the ball...
● - Long pass/centre ball

- ✗ - Short pass
- - Shoot
- ▲ - Through pass
- On defence...**
- - Sliding tackle
- ✗ - Press
- ▲ - Keeper



TONY HAWK'S SKATEBOARDING

ACTIVISION • SKATEBOARDING
SIM • PLAYABLE DEMO

Aren't we good to you lot? Here's your chance to play the best skateboarding game ever. This demo of *Tony Hawk's Skateboarding* is

just a tiny taste of what the full game has to offer.

Select either Bob Burnquist or Tony Hawk and skate to your heart's content at Chicago City's purpose-built skatepark. This park is fantastic fun and has a huge kidney-shaped bowl, a perfect half-pipe, rails, a fun box, quarter-pipes and launch ramps everywhere.

Mastering the controls of this game will mean the difference between gliding gracefully above the rest of the world or looking like a football player in a tutu, and hitting the concrete like a ton of bricks.

Oh, and we do love spoiling you! Gnarly, eh?

Challenge: Top skaters should be scoring over 32,000 in the allocated time on this level but anything over 23,500 is a strong effort. Keep on boarding!



Controls

Using a digital pad, these are the basic controls for this demo.

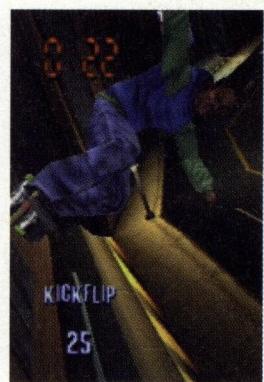
- ↑ - Lean forward
- - Turn/balance (while grinding)
- ↓ - Brake/lean back
- ▲ - Grind
- - Kick trick
- - Grab trick
- ✗ - Crouch and jump

Select - Camera

Start - Pause

Hold down ✗ to crouch; release it to jump (ollie). The longer you crouch the higher you ollie!

To grind hold down ▲ when in the air near a rail, edge or lip. When airborne, tap ● or ■ plus a direction on the D-Pad to do tricks.



THIS IS SOCCER

SONY • SOCCER SIM •
PLAYABLE DEMO

These are the minimum number of basic controls that you need to play. There are tons of additional moves to discover – try double taps and tap-and-hold or keeping down RI to see what happens.

This is Soccer introduced a far greater emphasis on intuitive play in soccer sims. With its comprehensive control system, *This is Soccer* is a challenging game that requires solid and consistent hours of gaming to master.

Even the hardest soccer boffins may find these



controls difficult (and sometimes even confusing!) to use.

Thousands of real-life stars and a fun eight-

player mode awaits in the full game. PSM suggests that you get cracking on this demo. After all, this is soccer, isn't it?



Controls

Attacking

- ✗ + ↑ - Through ball
- L2/R1 - Shimmies/stepovers
- Defending
- ✗ - Short/medium pass.
- (Double tap ✗ for a one-two)
- - Chip/long pass
- - Shoot
- ▲ - Button bash to sprint.
- (Hold ▲ to knock ball ahead)

L2/R1 - Shimmies/stepovers

Defending

- ✗ - Block tackle
- - Hook tackle
- ▲ - Slide
- RI - Switch defensive player



your guide to...

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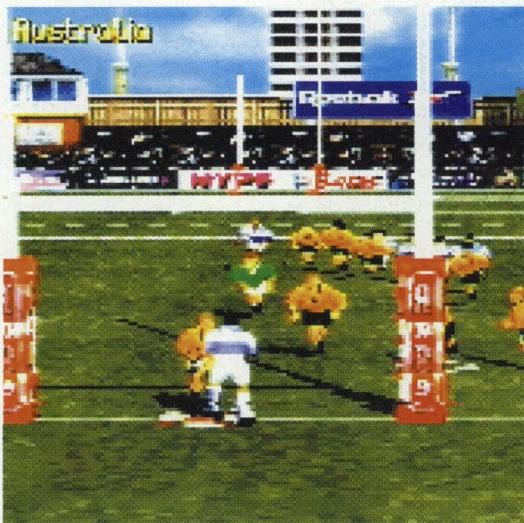
JONAH LOMU RUGBY

CODEMASTERS • RUGBY SIM
• PLAYABLE DEMO

Despite losing to South Africa in the 1995 Rugby World Cup final, this ginormous All Black was the success story of the tournament. Jonah is big by nature, and he also has his name on the best and most successful rugby simulation available on the PlayStation.

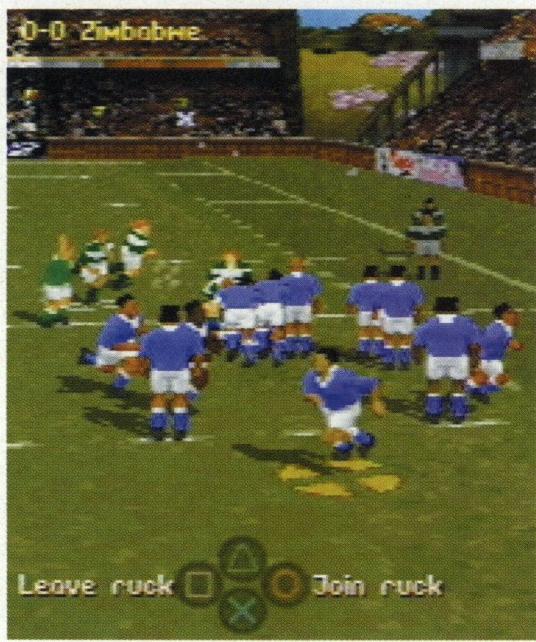
The gameplay is representative of the real sport with big hits, intense lineouts, heavy rucking and slick backline plays. Classic matches, the World Cup and territory leagues are all available in *Jonah Lomu's Rugby*.

This sim makes for an entertaining and competitive play with your mates and is



capped off with hilarious commentary from Bill McLaren. You'll be at greater risk from Bill putting you in stitches on the sideline

Watch out for Jonah too, he's really quite a sight in videogame form...

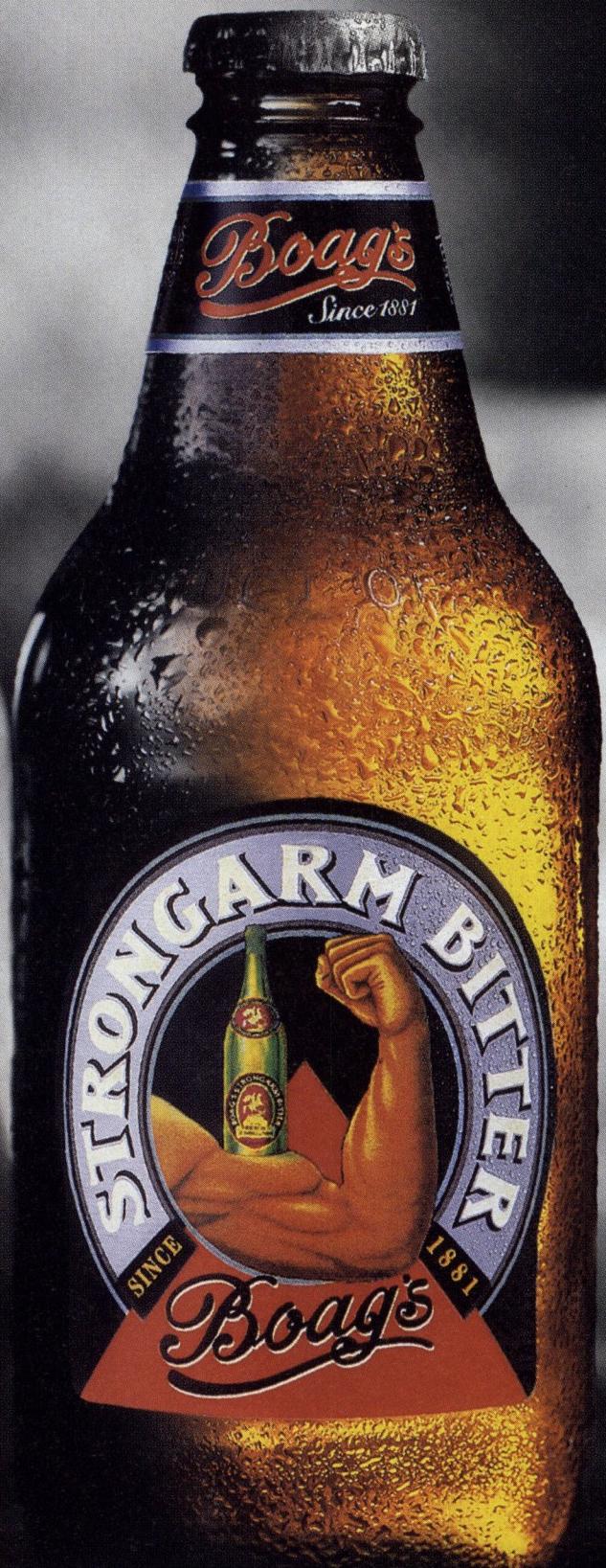


Controls
Jonah Lomu Rugby uses a great system where the controls change according to the type of play, so you have a different control method for a line-out than you do for a penalty, and so on. When the controls do change a little icon appears on screen to show you what each button does. Sounds complicated but it soon becomes simple. Here are some of the most important moves you'll need throughout the game.

Scrum
X - Put in
● - Pushing in
■ - Digging in
RI - Right pass
LI - Left pass
Lineout
X - Tap ball
● - Catch ball
X - Quick throw in
■ - Build a ruck
● - Adding players
■ - Removing players
X - Grab ball
●, X, ■ - Grounding a try
Tackle
● - Smother tackle
X - Diving tackle



Challenge: Kick some goals from the sideline. Converting tries has never been so difficult but after working out the (strange) way to angle your kicks – you'll be taking celebratory beer showers with the best of 'em.



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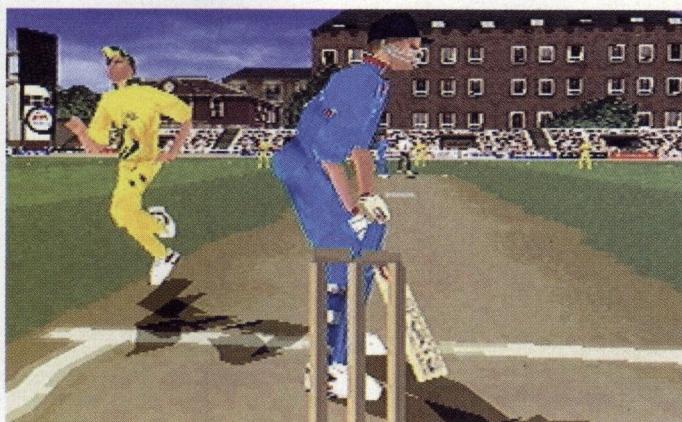
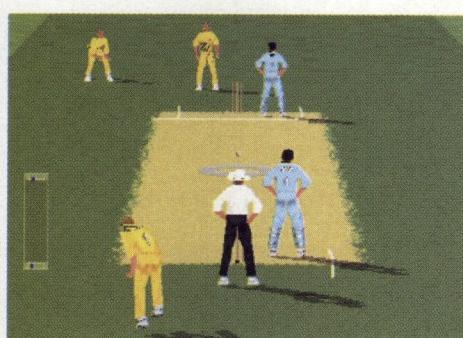
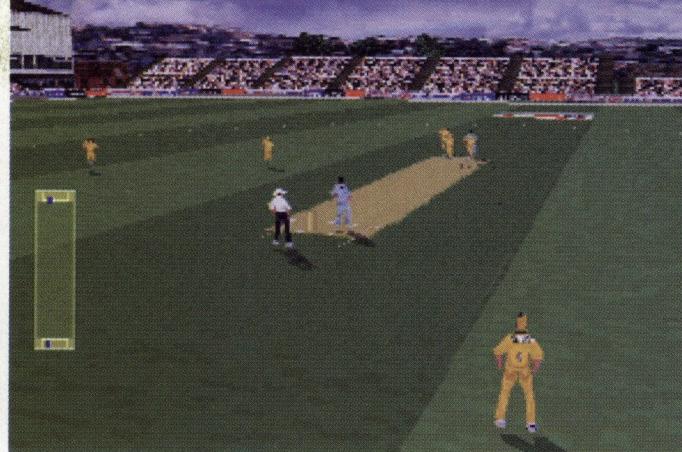
EDITED BY JASON HILL



FORMER COMPUTER EDITOR OF VICTORIA'S HERALD SUN NEWSPAPER, JASON IS ONE OF THE MOST RESPECTED VIDEOGAMES JOURNALISTS IN AUSTRALIA. HERE HE EXPANDS ON THE BEST SPORTS GAMES COMING YOUR WAY SOON

More than a sporting chance

While its presentation and ball control are superior to Codemasters' *Shane Warne Cricket*, *Cricket 2000* is not the quantum leap we'd hoped for.



Cricket 2000

STEP UP to the crease and see what the opposition can throw at you.

Sometimes the waiting is worthwhile.
Sadly, that doesn't seem the case
with EA's *Cricket 2000*.

While its presentation and ball control are superior to Codemasters' *Shane Warne Cricket*, *Cricket 2000* is not the quantum leap we'd hoped for.

After watching the FMV intro, you're given the choice of Quick Start, Friendly, World Cup or Super Six modes. The omission of test matches is appalling, although the World Cup nations, famous venues and players are included.

Controls are easy to use, but *PSM* had higher hopes. When batting you can move the batsman left and right,

although you can't charge down the wicket. A graph helps you time your shots but makes the game too easy.

Bowling is never as much fun as batting and here you use the power meter in much the same way as the graph. PSM isn't impressed by the variety of balls to bowl either.

We have no gripes about camera angles or commentators (Richie Benaud and David Gower) but fielding is automatic only and features ridiculously intelligent fieldsmen.

Playing against a mate, PSM is sure you'll have fun with *Cricket 2000*. But a lot of problems need ironing out before the release.

INFORMATION

ON SALE:	MARCH 2000
GAME STYLE:	A CRICKET SIMULATION, FROM THE MAKERS OF <i>FIFA 2000</i>
WHY IT'LL BE GREAT:	SIMPLY BECAUSE IT DOUBLES THE NUMBER OF CRICKET GAMES TO PLAY
IF YOU LOVE THESE, YOU'LL LOVE THIS:	<i>SHANE WARNE CRICKET</i> , POLISHED SPORTS SIMS LIKE <i>FIFA</i> , WATCHING CRICKET ON CHANNEL 9

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the very best sports games heading your way...

YOUR JARGON-BUSTING GUIDE

BEAT 'EM UP - FIGHTING GAME	PLATFORM GAMES - CUTE CHARACTERS RUN AND JUMP
COIN-OP - ARCADE MACHINE	RENDERED - DRAWN BY COMPUTER
FMV - FULL MOTION VIDEO	RPG - ROLE-PLAYING GAMES
MOTION-CAPTURE - REALISTIC, LIFELIKE ANIMATION	SIM - REALISTIC SIMULATION STYLE GAME
NTSC - STANDARD US/JAPAN TV FORMAT	SHOOT 'EM UP - GAMES YOU FIRE IN!
PAL - STANDARD AUSTRALIAN TV FORMAT	SPRITE - SMALL CUTE GAME CHARACTER



Trick opportunities are plentiful on most courses, as are alternate routes – a welcome new feature to the series.



The slopes and scenery are by far the most impressive of any snowboarding game yet seen. No drop off in graphical quality in head-to-head either.

Cool Boarders 4

WAX DOWN your board and get your fingers ready for snowspeed action

Cool Boarders has always had an advantage over its rivals because it was the first of its kind on the PlayStation. Yet, in reality, the games released so far have fallen slightly short of expectations. What's more, with the arrival of *MTV Snowboarding* and Capcom's *Trick 'N' Snowboarder*, the console isn't in need of another snowboarding game.

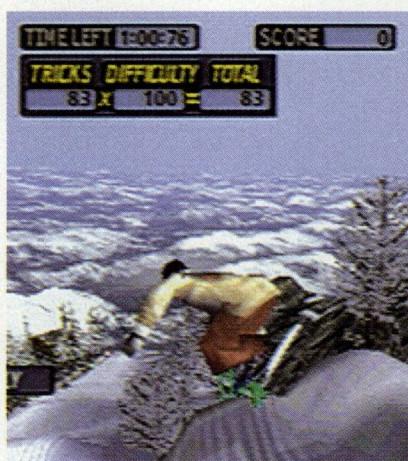
But developer, 989 Studios, is determined to make the definitive snowboarding game. Taking on board criticisms of the previous games, 989 has introduced a raft of new features. One obvious change is that *CB3* uses real-life snowboarders (not that most of us would be able to tell our Otterstroms from our Halopoffs) and

genuine board manufacturers. Each boarder is capable of performing hundreds of tricks and special moves, PSM's particular favourite being the 'stalefish tweak'.

Gameplay offers all you could want, with the usual Downhill, Half Pipe and Big Air Modes, spread over five distinctive mountains. There's also a four-player option, which'll enable you to shame your friends with your gnarly method melons. Each of the 30 courses is packed with detail and conceals a secret event, triggered if you prove your prowess.

CB3 was let down by its control method but 989 promises that – coupled with speeds reaching 30fps – *CB4* will be a doddle to control.

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INFORMATION

ON SALE:	MARCH 2000
GAME STYLE:	SNOWBOARDING SIM. A SPORTY VARIATION ON THE RACING GENRE
WHY IT'LL BE GREAT:	HEAPS OF COURSES AND THE BEST GRAPHICS OF THIS STYLE GAME
IF YOU LOVE THESE, YOU'LL LOVE THIS:	COOL BOARDERS 2 & 3, TRENDY SNOWBOARD CLOTHES, RACING GAMES, SKATEBOARDING



INFORMATION

ON SALE: OUT NOW
GAME STYLE: MOUNTAIN BIKING SIMULATION
WHY IT'LL BE GREAT: THERE'S NOTHING ELSE QUITE LIKE IT
IF YOU LOVE THESE, YOU'LL LOVE THIS: MOUNTAIN BIKING, PLAYSTATION SNOWBOARD GAMES, MUD

All the mist and hazy atmosphere of an early morning trek over the mountains.

No Fear Downhill Mountain Biking

GET MUDDY as you take on slopes and tracks around the world

Despite the track record of UDS' MD, Peter Zetterberg, (*Ignition* and *Absolute Pinball* for the PC), *No Fear* is the company's PlayStation debut.

Realistic physics can make for a boring game so UDS has focussed on the arcade parts rather than the sim. And the bike set-up adds to both the gameplay and the realism.

After 18 months' work on *No Fear*'s game engine, it seems that UDS may have pulled off the balance of purist-pleasing realism and arcade thrills.

There are seven different settings, each with three items to choose from. Plus you select your wheels (carbon or aluminium steel) and your frame

(carbon-fibre etc) according to the trail information (the streets of San Francisco or Vancouver's Sunshine Forest, for example).

Changing the set-ups is great but winning opens up the Trick Trail.

Ah, the Trick Trail where you can learn 14 different tricks plus combos for extra points. A great distraction but it's nigh-on impossible to pull a 360 degree somersault while careering downhill at a rate of knots.

It's the mix of realism, fun and design that will make *No Fear*. An over-the-handlebars view offers a genuine sense of speed, and it should look as good as it plays.

Q & A

No Fear is as good as the real thing - Peter Zetterberg tells us why.



Q Describe the game in 100 words or less.

A *No Fear Downhill Mountain Biking*

Mountain Biking is a fast-paced racing game. You get to ride mountain bikes as fast as possible down hazardous trails, battling your opponents in tough competitions. Players can choose their own character, modify bikes and compete against the PlayStation or a friend on tracks spread throughout the globe. There's a whole array of very different terrains to cover and weather conditions to deal with and, afterwards, there's a graphically gorgeous replay mode. There's also a large selection of bike tricks to attempt and even a specific Trick Trail, complete with extra trick training.

Q Any remarkable new gameplay elements in there that set *No Fear* apart from the throng?

A I guess this is the first real mountain bike game and that itself makes it different. Sure, there have been earlier attempts, but I haven't seen anything like this before.

Q What is it that drags people back to *No Fear* for just one more try?

A Their will to beat their opponents and their own previous best times as well as seeing new tracks and getting new bike upgrades to play

around with. You race against one opponent at a time, so it always gets very personal and it's a real thrill to see yourself on the prize ladder. It's not like racing against a number of anonymous drones, something that plagues racing games.

Q What research did you do to manufacture realism?

A The team visited mountain biking championships, looked at loads of video recordings of races and got experienced mountain bikers involved in the project. They have provided us with a lot of useful input and commented on the bike handling and tracks.

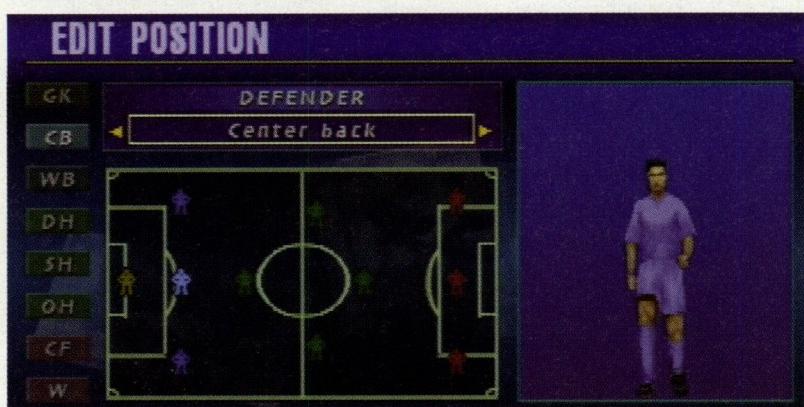
Q Why should punters choose *No Fear Downhill Mountain Biking* over any of the biking game competition?

A Because it's fun, it has real long-term game values and is different from your average racing game. If you reckon you've mastered racing down the slopes you can start experimenting with the tricks and then progress to fiddling with the bike configuration to get the optimum one.

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the very best sports games heading your way...>>>



Rather than lumbering motion-captured polygons, *ISS* players have an animated feel to them. It's a look which fits perfectly with the fluent gameplay. *ISS Evolution* is by far the most subtle and addictive soccer game that you can get your hands on.



ISS Pro Evolution

KING OF the soccer games reigns supreme but for one on-going fault

The presentation is awesome, the animated touches, shots and link play superb, but *ISS Pro Evolution* pays the price for its motion-captured glory. Players often stop in their tracks when possession is lost and the animation has to catch up, making it impossible to regain the ball.

The controls enable shimmies, precise passes and 30-yard volleys. Yet this one tragic flaw means that its reign as King of PlayStation Soccer will probably be short-lived.

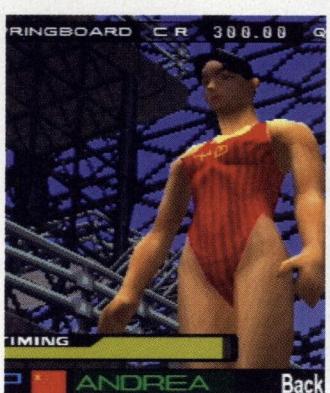
The game boasts international squads and venues, and tournaments are preceded by crowd noise and cut scenes. But in terms of skill *Evolution* out-plays Brazil's 1970 squad.

The incredible control system utilises all the buttons on the joypad and only gets better with repeated play. Every aspect of control is duly handed to the player. Ordinarily, a through-ball will stand little chance of reaching its target, but by using the L1 button to hit a longer ball into space, defenders can be caught flat-footed. And the joy of latching on to a long-pass is incomparable. It also shows up *FIFA 2000*'s utter lack of skill and precision.

Evolution creates a new benchmark for soccer but, sadly, its glory is tainted by the loss of control. Konami has put *ISS Pro* back on at the top of the PlayStation Premiership.



INFORMATION	
ON SALE:	OUT NOW
GAME STYLE:	A SOCCER SIMULATION WITH THE EMPHASIS ON INTRICATE PASSING
WHY IT'LL BE GREAT:	IT'S SIMPLY THE BEST SOCCER GAME EVER MADE ON ANY GAMES CONSOLE
IF YOU LOVE THESE, YOU'LL LOVE THIS:	<i>ISS Pro 98</i> , WATCHING ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE SOCCER, SOCCER SIMS RATHER THAN ARCADE SOCCER



Essentially, it's still that same arcade game from years ago, but it just looks so real now.



INFORMATION

ON SALE:	MARCH 2000
GAME STYLE:	BUTTON-BASHING ATHLETICS SIM WITH UPDATED GRAPHICS
WHY IT'LL BE GREAT:	WITH THE OLYMPICS ON THE WAY EVERYONE WILL LOVE THIS
IF YOU LOVE THESE, YOU'LL LOVE THIS:	OLD-STYLE ARCADE BUTTON-BASHERS, ATHLETICS, TWO-PLAYER GAMES LIKE <i>SMASH COURT</i>

Int' Track & Field 2

FLEX YOUR fingers, grab your pals and a multitap. There's fun to be had

The main difference between *Track & Field 2* and the world of athletics is that your fingers are put to the test rather than your legs. Endurance events will develop digit muscles you didn't know existed. Less robust gamers, however, will suffer from blisters and RSI – although it won't stop anyone going back for more.

There are 12 different events with the new additions of canoeing, vaulting, diving and cycling. And they offer a surprising amount of variety although some events (high-jump, hurdles...) have been cut in a move away from the previous game.

The 100m requires you to hit ■ and ● but other events are technical in comparison. With a bit of practice

you'll soon take every world record you can think of.

Once you've got them all, *Track & Field 2* comes into its own as a party game – the more players you have, the more fun you'll have.

Visually, *Track & Field 2* is impressive with its swooping camera, action replays and photo finishes adding a sense of style to the occasion.

International Track & Field 2 is the *Bomberman* of the sports games. Take smashing ■ and ●, chuck in a few mates, a multitap and a beer or three and *Track & Field 2* shines. There are few games on the PlayStation more competitive, exhausting and more reliant on you having three like-minded mates.

Q&A

Director/programmer Mr Hose cracks his knuckles and breaks the silence*



have been greatly improved. The game is now fantastically realistic – particularly the animation of the players.

Q What games have the *Track & Field 2* team worked on before?

A Some were involved with the original game, but most were involved with *Nagano Winter Olympics '98*.

Q Tell us a secret about *Track & Field 2*.

A Try to find the hidden characters from the original, who've been specially beefed up.

Q What's your favourite section of the game?

A I like the new cycling event. I've done so much play testing on it, that I suffered from muscular problems. It's important to remember is that *International Track & Field 2* is best played with lots of people.

Q Any chance of a *Track & Field* peripheral with soft buttons to prevent calluses?

A Good idea. I'm pleased that there are people who are so fanatical about the game.



NBA Showtime 2000

LOOKS AREN'T always the be all and end all, as this game goes to prove

As many basketball games come from Midway, via its *NBA Jam* franchise, *NBA Showtime* is essentially *NBA Jam CVXIII*. This means you get a two-on-two game with the emphasis on arcade action over realistic gameplay. In addition, *Showtime* retains *Jam's* tendency to overload the game with ludicrous hidden characters. Blokes With Exceptionally Big Heads and team mascots are conspicuous.

Showtime's front-end is minimalist at best, and the options are virtually non-existent. It is played strictly for laughs, and its bells and whistles are hidden deep within the game.

What *Showtime* lacks in detail, it makes up for in moves, action and

multiplayer larks. Frankly, if you and three mates can hook up, then you'll find yourselves playing one of the best multiplayer sports games around. It may only be two-on-two, but the lack of AI players works to limit confusion, and increase the essential competitiveness.

However, it isn't without its flaws. The graphics are chunky and not as smooth as other basketball games. Perhaps detail has been sacrificed in favour of speed and playability, but, coupled with the bare-ass front-end, it just looks sloppy.

Still, if you're happy to sacrifice looks for action you'll get a frantic tongue-in-cheek sports game.

With its huge dunking ability, this is not a game for the basketball purists. It's fun though.



INFORMATION

ON SALE:

OUT NOW

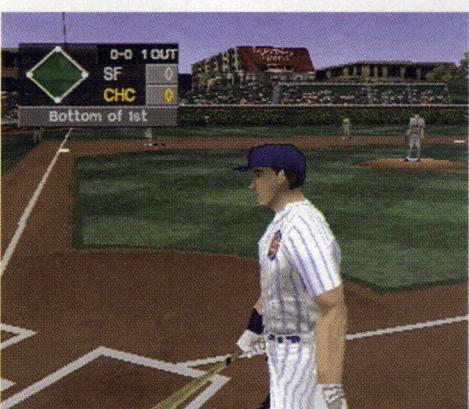
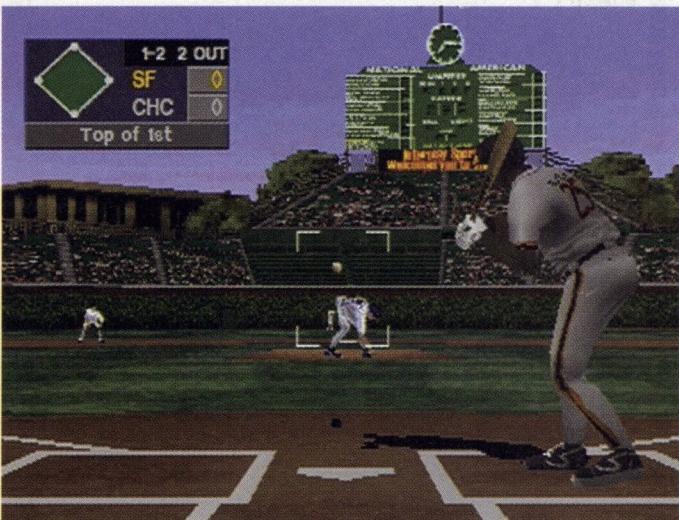
GAME STYLE:

A FULL-ON ARCADE BASKETBALL
GAME IN AN *NFL Blitz 2000* STYLE

WHY IT'LL BE GREAT: FULL OF FRANTIC GAMEPLAY AND LAUGHS. GREAT MULTIPLAYER FUN.

**IF YOU LOVE THESE, NFL BLITZ 2000 AND READY 2
YOU'LL LOVE THIS: RUMBLE-STYLE GAMES, BASKETBALL,
BIG TRAINERS**

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For many, Baseball is a monotonous affair, and certainly it's a minority sport in Australia. Still, it's a fun alternative to practice your cricket skills with.

INFORMATION

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| ON SALE: | OUT NOW |
| GAME STYLE: | BASEBALL SIMULATION – YOU THROW THE BALL, YOU HIT THE BALL... |
| WHY IT'LL BE GREAT: | FOR FANS OF THE SPORT THERE AREN'T TOO MANY GOOD TITLES |
| IF YOU LOVE THESE, YOU'LL LOVE THIS: | <i>TRIPLE PLAY 2000</i> , BASEBALL, POSSIBLY CRICKET FANS WILL LIKE IT TOO, AMERICAN SPORTS GAMES |

Baseball 2000

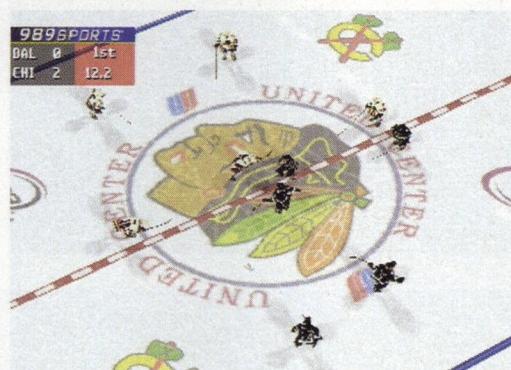
NOT A national sport, but entertaining enough to keep you occupied?

Are there enough fans in Australia to support two baseball games? Interplay obviously thinks so, or it wouldn't be going up against EA's *Triple Play 2000*. So, for those who watch the sport on Foxtel, this will be a special treat. For both of you.

At first glance, *Baseball 2000* is barely distinguishable from the EA title. It uses the over-the-plate view for batting and pitching, covering fielding with a floating camera or quick cuts between different angles.

After a while though, the more sophisticated pitching and less forgiving batting become obvious.

Novices and armchair fans are likely to prefer EA's offering. Not because there's anything wrong with *Baseball 2000*, rather because, unless you were raised on tales of Babe Ruth, the game can get very monotonous very quickly. Easy-to-use controls and a stack of options mark this out, but the restrictions of the sport itself severely limit its appeal.



As you can see the graphics of *NHL Face Off* are not its selling point. The gameplay is spot on though and action is ultra realistic.

NHL Face Off 2000

FIGHT FIGHT! The speed, the violence, the slapping in front of the goal...

The usual puckery abounds in *NHL Face Off 2000* with renditions of *The Star Spangled Banner* and Wurlitzer ditties, violent checks and one-on-one fights. You can also create your own players in the new management section.

Superbly, fighting forms a kind of sub-game – an amusing diversion that adds venom to multiplayer games. Sound effects recreate the ambience and player cards make for a fascinating study of the mullet 'do.

But it's the new I.C.E. AI that gives the game its edge over EA's *NHL 2000*. Defensive players circle the box during penalties and the goalies will do anything to cover the goal making a variety of saves using glove, stick, kick and block. This makes scoring a definite challenge.

Despite 150 motion-captured animations the graphics let *Face Off 2000* down, only mustering dull four-way shadows cast by the floods. It's fast, real and raw, but it's no beauty.

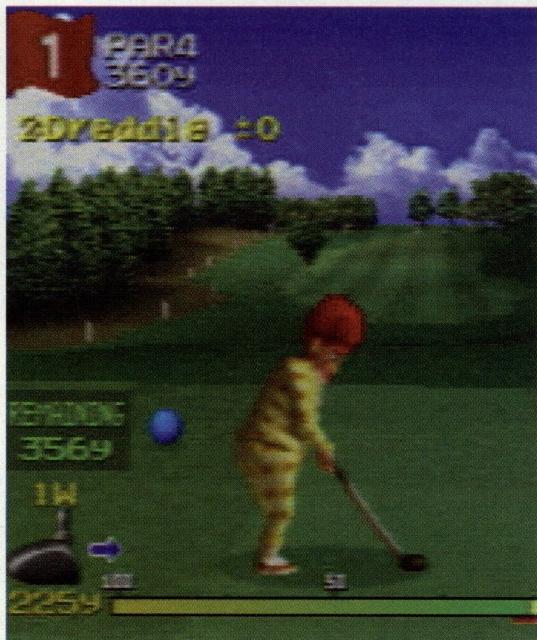
INFORMATION

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| ON SALE: | OUT NOW |
| GAME STYLE: | ICE HOCKEY GAME WHICH FALLS HALF WAY BETWEEN ARCADE AND SIM |
| WHY IT'LL BE GREAT: | SOUND AND REALISM IS INCREDIBLE AND MULTI-PLAYER FUN IS GREAT |
| IF YOU LOVE THESE, YOU'LL LOVE THIS: | FAST MOVING SPORTS GAMES, ICE HOCKEY, REALISTIC GAMEPLAY OVER LOOKS, <i>NHL FACE OFF '99</i> |

incoming <<< >>>



If you've never seen the original version of *Everybody's Golf*, then, yes, the characters taking part do look faintly ridiculous – and certainly not like Tiger Woods. Fear not, the gameplay makes this the most exciting, easy-to-use and realistic golf game on the market.



Everybody's Golf 2

THE SEQUEL to everybody's favourite game is about to tee off

Everybody's Golf was a game that all could enjoy, from aficionados of the white ball to arcade gamers. And the release of titles such as *Cyber Tiger* (3/10 in PSM 31) help to highlight the brilliance of *Everybody's Golf* 2.

Everybody's 2 keeps the points and user-friendly control systems, but offers a visual re-vamp, seven new courses, new characters plus several additions including club sets, a choice of balls and seasonal features.

The seasons add to the game's realism affecting the courses and playing conditions. Not only do they improve the look of the game, but

they add to the challenge and replay value. And, like the original, there are plenty of cameras to view the action.

The game features 13 Westernised characters, five different club sets and six types of ball to wallop around the seasonal courses once you've beaten the tour mode. Three selectable characters are available at first, but more skilful ones can be unlocked in the versus mode.

A new addition to the game is a pitch-and-putt par-3 course, which is perfect for a quick whack-around.

Soon everybody will be taking to the green and having a ball.

INFORMATION

ON SALE: 28 APRIL 2000

GAME STYLE: ARCADE-STYLE GOLF SIMULATION WITH CARTOON GRAPHICS

WHY IT'LL BE GREAT: THE ORIGINAL IS SIMPLE TO PLAY YET OFFERS A HUGE CHALLENGE

IF YOU LOVE THESE, YOU'LL LOVE THIS: *EVERYBODY'S GOLF*, *CYBER TIGER*, *MARIO GOLF*, *LOUD PANTS*, *WHACKING A LITTLE BALL WITH A BIG STICK*



RALPH's code of behaviour.

RALPH

April issue out now

incoming

the very best sports games heading your way... >>>

The world mode is by far the game's greatest attribute where you can organise fights, training and fiscal side of the business

Q&A

Q

So, do you actually own a PlayStation?

R

Oh yeah! I'm well into it. My brothers got me interested a couple of years ago. My favourite are the sports games, particularly football. I love *World Cup '98*. Otherwise, it's the fighting games – *Street Fighter*, *Tekken* – I play one-on-ones with my brothers and yeah, before you ask, I do beat 'em. Well, most of the time.

Q

Can you see yourself relaxing by playing your own game?

R

Well, yeah. I'm delighted to have my own game. It's up there with the great achievements.

He the man! We talked to the self-proclaimed Prince of boxing about his transformation into game icon...

Having your own PlayStation game is like having your own television show. I've been down there a lot, working on it with the programmers. I love the way my character looks and moves. They've got it dead right.

D

But how's it going to feel when you're playing someone and they beat you? (Oops! Touchy question!)

H

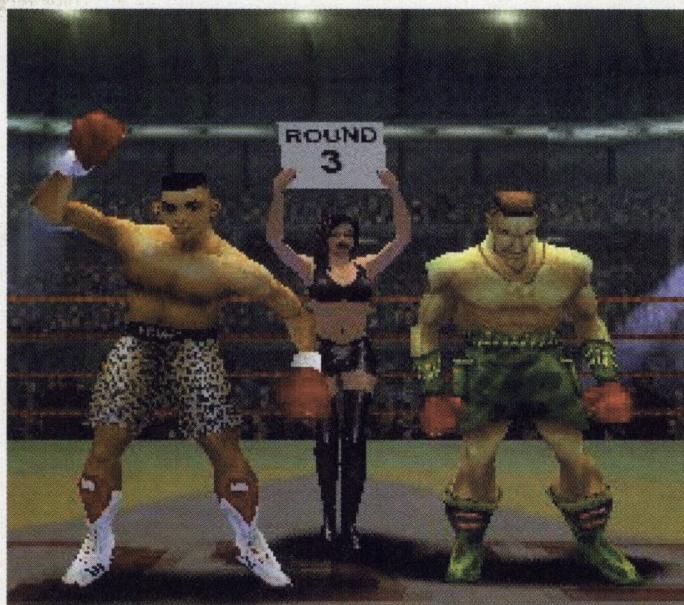
I don't know about that. I had hoped they were gonna make my character unbeatable – like in real life. But it wouldn't be much of a game then, would it? I have told 'em, "Make sure I'm really hard to beat". Otherwise, I might have to go round there to put things right.





INFORMATION

ON SALE: APRIL 2000
GAME STYLE: A BOXING SIM WITH EMPHASIS ON BOXING RATHER THAN FIGHTING
WHY IT'LL BE GREAT: IF YOU'RE A FAN OF BOXING YOU'LL LOVE THE SUBTLETY OF THIS
IF YOU LOVE THESE, YOU'LL LOVE THIS: *KNOCKOUT KINGS 2000*, WATCHING BOXING ON FOXTEL, THE *Victory Boxing 2* DEMO ON THIS MAGAZINE



Prince Naseem Boxing

WHEN THIS man wants his own PlayStation game, he gets one.

The key to *Prince Naseem Boxing's* appeal lies with its uncomplicated control method. Naseem's input means that the most commonly used button is **X**, to raise the fighters' gloves to block. This is the basis of the control system, with the shoulder buttons allowing for deflection or avoidance of punches. This mastered, the jabs, hooks, body punches and Naz-style taunts soon start to flow.

Naseem is the only real boxer in 15-strong roster and players opt to guide one fighter, each with his own

techniques and weaknesses, to the game's three title belts.

Codemasters created each fighter from scratch and you'll goggle at the sweat flying after big punches.

Naseem Boxing extends its longevity through three game modes. The world mode is by far the game's greatest attribute where you can organise fights, training and fiscal side of the business. It also adds depth marking *Prince Naseem Boxing* as a heavyweight certain to lift the PlayStation title belt.

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Sports Games Release Schedule

Get your running shoes on. These sports titles are about to go gold and arrive at your games' store soon.

EDITED BY

JASON HILL



DEPUTY EDITOR OF *OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE*, JASON HAS BEEN WRITING ABOUT VIDEOGAMES FOR OVER A DECADE. THERE'S JUST NOTHING ABOUT PLAYSTATION HE DOESN'T KNOW.

Cool Boarders 4	Sony	Feb 00
The latest and greatest installment in Sony's popular snowboarding series offers a four-player option, improved controls and real snowboarders. There are also five mountains from around the world on which to show off your speed and tricks.		
International Track & Field 2	Konami/GT Interactive	Feb 00
More button-bashing Olympic action from master of the genre, Konami. Whack the joypad buttons as fast as you can in 15 events such as the 100m, long jump and hammer. But there are also events that challenge your timing, like diving and cycling.		
ISS Pro Evolution	Konami/GT Interactive	Feb 00
There's no doubt that this is the finest soccer game ever. <i>PSM</i> Towers has already enjoyed many tournaments on the preview version. The game is wonderfully realistic, requiring real soccer tactics to win.		
This is Soccer	Sony	Feb 00
Undoubtedly a fine representation of one of the world's most popular sports, and absolutely dazzling in the graphics department. Unfortunately, in a penalty shoot-out against <i>Evolution</i> , it will hit the bar every time.		
Baseball 2000	Interplay	Mar 00
A worthy competitor against EA's <i>Triple Play</i> series, but will probably fail to score a homer simply because it doesn't bear the EA Sports' brand. The pitching system is very sophisticated, and the control system is easy to pick up.		
Brunswick Circuit Bowling 2	THQ/GT Interactive	Mar 00
Ten-pin bowling action with real tournaments endorsed by the US Professional Bowling Association, genuine bowlers from the league, and an all-new Brunswick bowling kit. Use the create-a-bowler to mould your character into the bowler of your dreams.		
Cricket 2000	EA	Mar 00
Strap on the pads against all the World Cup squads in one-day or Super Six games. Both batting and bowling controls are easy to use, and batsmen have a good range of shots at their disposal. But it's going to have to be good to hit <i>Warnie</i> for six.		
NBA Showtime on NBC	Midway/Metro Games	Mar 00
Boomska! Another mad two-on-two slam dunkfest from the makers of <i>NBA Jam</i> . If you're looking for an in-depth basketball simulation, look elsewhere, but as a fast-paced party game against your mates, this is superb fun.		
NHL Blades of Steel 2000	Konami/GT Interactive	Mar 00
No matter how good Konami's ice hockey simulation is, you'd be hard pressed to choose it over the sublime <i>NHL 2000</i> , which is an almost faultless and highly enjoyable representation of this niche sport.		
NHL Face Off 2000	989 Studios/Sony	Mar 00
Another worthy NHL title that just doesn't measure up to EA Sports' offering. You have total control over signing, sacking and creating players for your team, but controls are just a little frustrating, not giving you enough precise control over your players.		
Premier Manager 2000	Infogrames/Ozisoft	Mar 00
When released, <i>Premier Manager '99</i> was about the best soccer management package on PlayStation, but since then Codemasters has brought us the incredible <i>LMA Manager</i> , which has raised the bar massively. This will need a thorough overhaul.		

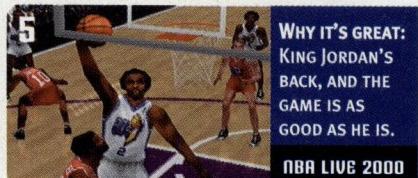
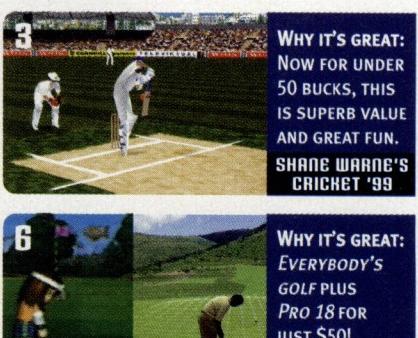
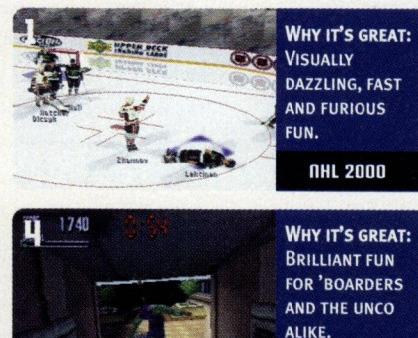
Street Skater II	EA	Mar 00
Another arcade-style skateboarding simulation from EA. The original was fun and addictive, but miserly on tracks. The sequel must offer a lot more tricks and courses if it is going to out-point the master, <i>Tony Hawk</i> .		
Tiger Woods 2000	EA	Mar 00
It's not going to be hard to out-score the embarrassingly bad <i>Cyber Tiger</i> which was one of the worst games of '99, but the preview version suggests <i>Tiger</i> will be hitting pars while <i>Everybody's Golf 2</i> shoots eagles.		
UEFA Championship League 2000	Eidos/Ozisoft	Mar 00
The original was everything a good soccer simulation should be: it was slick, boasted host of easy moves and recreated the buzz of a live game. Unfortunately, the action was slow, which spoiled the game, and should be fixed for this update.		
Euro 2000	EA	Apr 00
The official soccer sim for the European Football championships, held every four years. This year the venue is Belgium and Holland. Expect yet another <i>FIFA</i> update with all the updated European teams and Euro 2000 fixtures.		
Everybody's Golf 2	Camelot/Sony	Apr 00
At last a sequel to everybody's favourite golf game. The cartoon Japanese golfers with oversized heads have been replaced by Western characters like a fat bloke that scratches his bum, but it's the seasonal features and 7 new courses that will appeal.		
Jimmy White's Cueball 2	Virgin/Ozisoft	Apr 00
Should be the most fun and realistic pool and snooker simulation on PlayStation, at least until Codemasters' game turns up, anyway. The physics are perfect, and there's motion-captured hands that look like ethereal white gloves.		
Prince Naseem Boxing	Codemasters/Ozisoft	Apr 99
The long-awaited, oft-delayed first truly realistic boxing simulation. The game will require real boxing strategies to win, not just button bashing à la <i>Knockout Kings</i> and <i>Ready 2 Rumble</i> .		
Ronaldo V-Soccer	Infogrames/Ozisoft	Apr 00
Yet another soccer simulation to try and take on <i>ISS</i> for the golden boot award. Infogrames banking on the appeal of the magician Ronaldo to sell the game, but few innovations have been revealed.		
World Championship Snooker	Codemasters/Ozisoft	Apr 00
A snooker simulation with the full TV treatment. The crowd coughs, the hushed commentary is perfect and the motion-captured players laconically chalk their cues. You can play trick shots and a host of game styles, and the physics are excellent.		
WWF Smackdown	THQ/GT Interactive	Apr 00
Should be the finest wrestling simulation yet. It rolicks along at a cracking pace, and is very easy to pick up and play. It features all the beefcake boys from the WWF, and the presentation is outstanding. The four-player option is the highlight.		
Speedball 2100	Empire/QV Software	May 00
Long-awaited sequel to the Amiga classic, regarded as the finest future sport sim ever made. The sequel dares not to alter the winning formula too much, keeping the play-field and rules unchanged but giving the visuals a new millennium makeover.		
International Cricket Captain	Empire/QV Software	May 00
Your chance to be the successor to Geoff Marsh as he steps down from management. Guide the unbeatable Aussies in tournaments around the globe by staring at countless statistics and graphs.		
Rugby 2000	EA	Jul 00
It's about time the PlayStation had an alternative to the aging <i>Jonah Lomu Rugby</i> . EA's effort features 20 international teams, over 600 real players and 25 stadiums from around the world. EA promises flexible "pick-up-and-play" controls.		
Olympic Games	Eidos/Ozisoft	Sep 00
The official Sydney 2000 Olympics simulation looks visually dazzling, but gameplay will follow the familiar button-bashing formula of Konami's popular <i>Track & Field</i> series. Events include 100m, swimming, hammer-throw, javelin, high jump and long jump.		

HANDS UP IF YOU'RE
A BADLY ANIMATED
UMPIRE FROM A
FORTHCOMING
CRICKET GAME...



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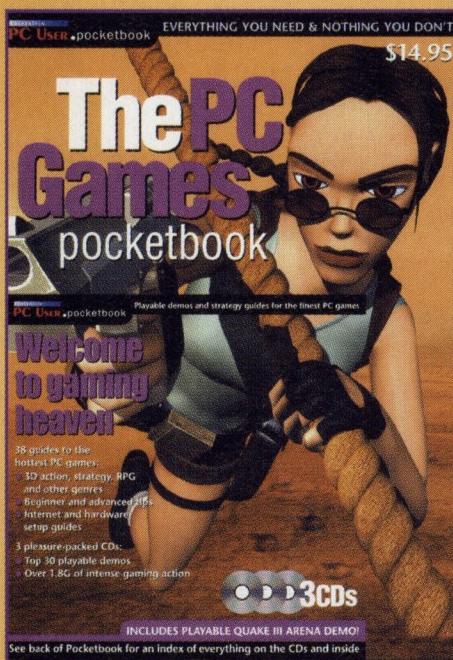
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STAR players

As PlayStation games have moved closer to reality, big name stars have been keen to get involved with the projects. Not only giving their name to a licence, but having a hands-on approach to the design process. We talked to some of the biggest stars in AFL, cricket, boxing and soccer about their thoughts of PlayStation sports games...

Shane Crawford

Young, good-looking, fit and famous. AFL star Shane Crawford talked to PSM about PlayStation's AFL '99.

PlayStation Magazine: What are your thoughts on this, the first, AFL game for PlayStation?

Shane Crawford: I found it easier to play than the PC version and I quickly became engrossed in it.

PSM: What's the best feature?

SC: The fast and furious gameplay.

PSM: How realistic is it?

SC: The gameplay feels very real, like I am in a proper game – but without the bruises after.

PSM: Is there more to AFL '99 than just kicking the ball around? Do you need a strategy to win?

SC: Definitely. You need to use realistic tactics and strategies because all the teams have realistic stats and require different tactics when playing with each team.

PSM: What would you suggest Electronic Arts should include in the next game?

SC: Nothing really, it has pretty much everything that is needed to have a good game of AFL. Perhaps, if more stadiums are added it would make it even better.

PSM: Any tips you can give PlayStation owners who have just bought the game?

SC: Always try to win the bounce ups as quickly as possible when starting the game. And, to stay in control, pass the ball to your team mates more often than kicking it.

PSM: Do you own a PlayStation?

If so, do any of your Hawthorn or Footy Show mates come around for a game? Other than AFL, do you have any other favourite games?

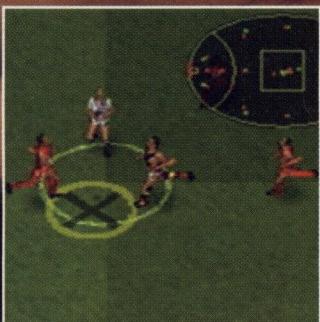
SC: Yes I do. Some of them come over from time to time to have a game or two. I enjoy the golf game Tiger Woods '99 and also the Need For Speed racing games.

PSM: Do you think playing AFL on PlayStation can help sharpen your skills on the field?

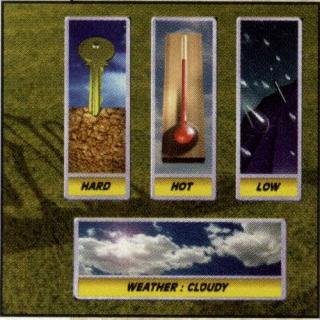
SC: In terms of strategies and tactics, this game allows me to see what the outcomes would be.

PSM: What would you do to make AFL on the field more like the PlayStation version?

SC: I'd make all my opponents five-foot tall and make them play badly.



Shane Warne



Shane Warne Cricket

- what more endorsement do you need for a game you already love?

PlayStation Magazine: So what do you think of your first video game?

SW: It's very good. I didn't know what to expect, but they bowl bouncers and try to knock off each other's heads. Throughout the game you can bowl and field how you want.

PSM: Is there more to *Shane Warne Cricket* than just whacking the ball around?

SW: Yes, it gives you several field options where you can put the field where you want. And it still keeps in line with the one-day restrictions.

PSM: What would you have Codemasters change in a sequel?

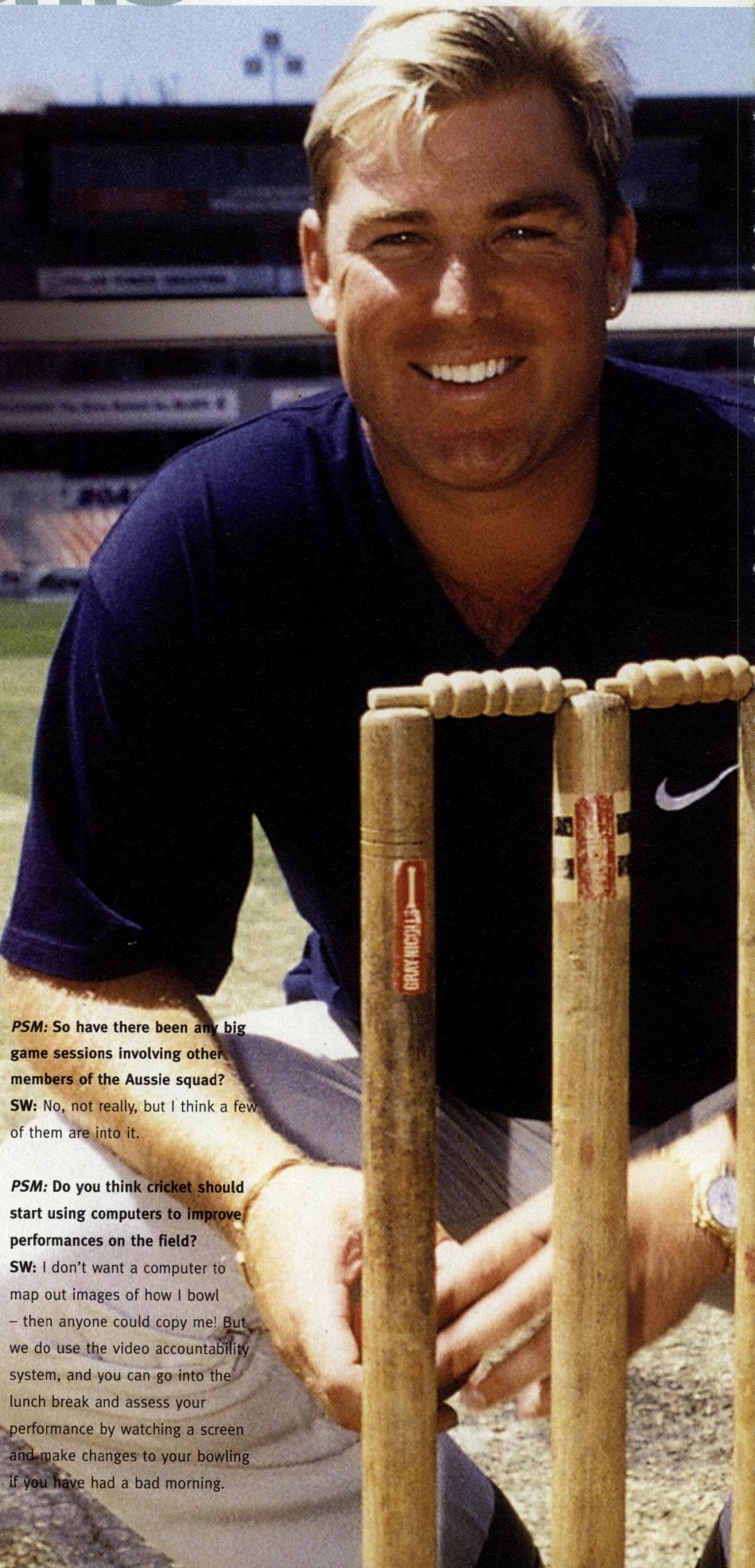
SW: I would want spin bowlers to always get a wicket first ball and I would have me hitting fours and sixes all over the place!

PSM: What if you were given more control over the real game?

SW: No warm-up sessions! I also think you should be able to bowl as many bouncers as you like and when a spinner is bowling and the ball pitches outside leg stump, I still think that should be out, so it makes them use their bat more. Or maybe fielders using baseball mitts!

PSM: Do you think your game can help budding cricketers?

SW: I think for players that are new to the sport, the game can help with the basics about where to pitch the ball and how to bat.



PSM: So have there been any big game sessions involving other members of the Aussie squad?

SW: No, not really, but I think a few of them are into it.

PSM: Do you think cricket should start using computers to improve performances on the field?

SW: I don't want a computer to map out images of how I bowl – then anyone could copy me! But we do use the video accountability system, and you can go into the lunch break and assess your performance by watching a screen and make changes to your bowling if you have had a bad morning.

Brian Lara

Brian Lara was very much involved with the design of *Cricket* as he explained to *PSM*

PSM: How much input did you have into the production of Codemasters' cricket game?

Brian Lara: The people developing the game needed a bit of realism and that's what I added. As a result you have a bowler delivering a ball properly and you can't play any crazy shots – you have to play a shot that a real batsman would.

PSM: So do you think it conveys the skill of real cricket?

BL: Most definitely. I can see youngsters learning about the game of cricket through PlayStation and wanting to get out in the park.

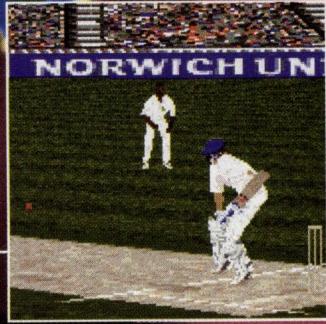
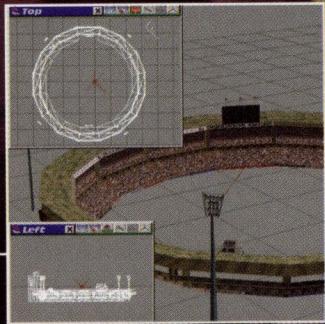
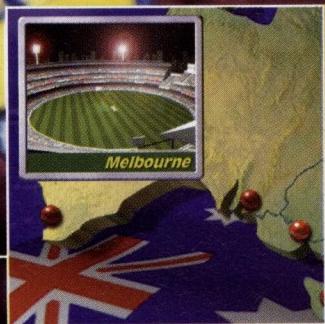
PSM: Is it disappointing to be caught out playing the game?

BL: Yeah, I haven't won a match yet – it's like my last summer! I can't beat this game and I haven't been able to score 60 runs in three overs in the real thing.

PSM: What aspects of the sport did you particularly want to emphasise in the game?

BL: The batting and bowling confrontation is the

most important aspect of the sport and that is definitely in there... it has to be evenly matched between the batsman and the bowler. If Shane Warne was bowling to an English batsmen, I think he'd have an easier time bowling to them in a real cricket match than in this computer game – believe it or not, the PlayStation game is actually harder to master!

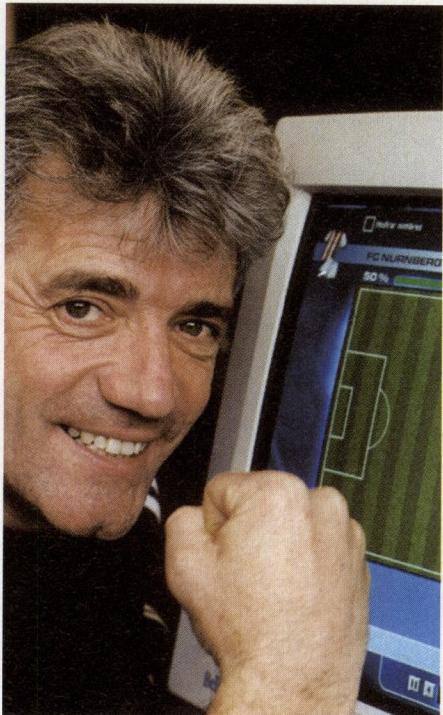


Kevin Keegan

PSM talked to Kevin Keegan about *Premier Manager '99*. Here are his thoughts about real-life soccer mirroring the PlayStation game:

There's more to soccer than what goes on on the pitch; the transfer market for example. In the next couple of years soccer management is going to go the way of this game. There's going to be a new system where you use a computer to pick a player you need. You input stuff like: not over 25, left back, less than half a million pounds – and within a month the computer will pick a list of 10 players.

Soccer clubs are moving into technology, and I'll be going back to *Premier Manager '99* to see if I can do any better!

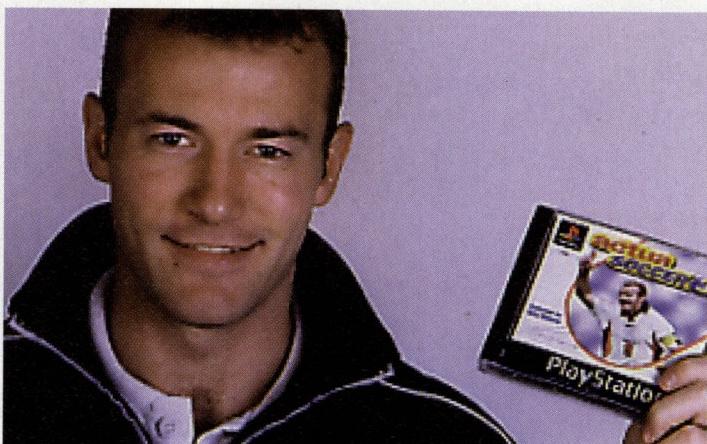


Alan Shearer

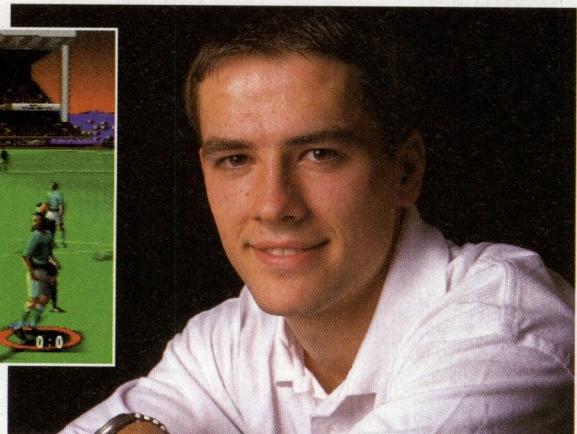
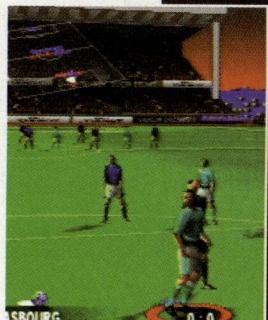
When PSM met England soccer captain and goalscoring legend Alan Shearer to talk about PlayStation, there was only one game that interested him. *Actua Soccer*.

So, we asked Alan whether he was any good at the game itself... "Aye, I'm not bad". We never actually got to put this comment to the test, but with Shearer being the sort of man he is,

we assume that he's probably put in some practice and would take some beating. And was he impressed with how *Actua Soccer* had finally turned out after he chipped in with his advice in the game's production: "Definitely. It's amazing how realistic these games are on the PlayStation. I think it's a great way for children to learn about the real game".



Michael Owen



PSM: Is that really you up there in *World League Soccer '99*?

MO: Yep. Eidos wanted the game to be good so I did as many tricks as I know for the motion capture.

PSM: Soccer players and PlayStation seem to go hand in hand...

MO: Yeah, a lot of the lads at Liverpool have a PlayStation. When you can't go running or training, it's a really good way to relax.

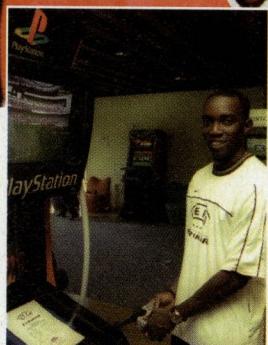
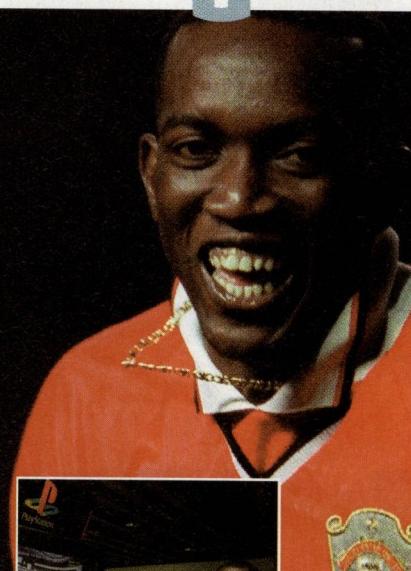
PSM: Are there any goal celebrations you wanted to get in *WLS '99*?

MO: There's the 'rubbing hands' one.

PSM: Could you have imagined having your own soccer game just a few years ago?

MO: No! I was playing well and scoring for Liverpool before. That's what helped me get in the England side, but it was the World Cup onwards that made my life change.

Dwight Yorke



Next on the PSM hitlist was Manchester United striker Dwight Yorke, fresh from completing the treble in his first season at Manchester United. We took him on at *UEFA Striker* and he showed that his PlayStation form was every bit as good as his on-pitch success.

Having said that he beat us with a terrible goal. "All goals are quality goals," muttered Yorke. We inquired if this included shots that hit your arse and bobble into the net. "Trust me, I'm a striker. Even if it hits a defender when you score it's still a quality goal." Beware, Dwight Yorke is a deadly player on or off the pitch. Especially considering that PSM played as Man United.

Lennox Lewis

PSM took Lennox Lewis on at *Knockout Kings* just before he took on Evander Holyfield. We hoped he'd do better for real...

PSM got together with Lennox Lewis as he trained for his fight with Evander Holyfield. At the time he was hungry for the fight, now he's the undisputed Heavyweight Champion of the World, something he proclaimed would happen when we talked to him. He wasn't quite so handy at playing *Knockout Kings* mind you, but we didn't like to mention it to him at the time.

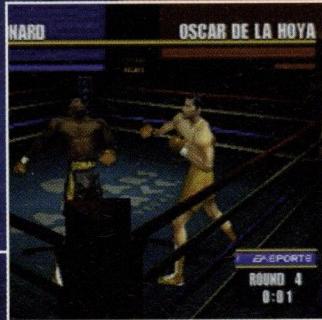
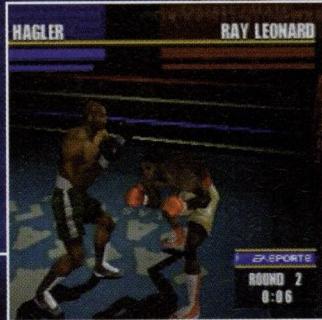
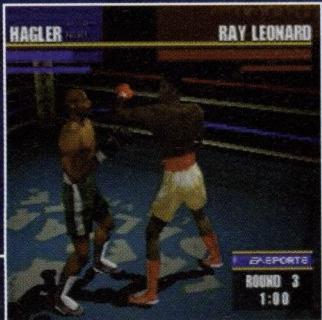
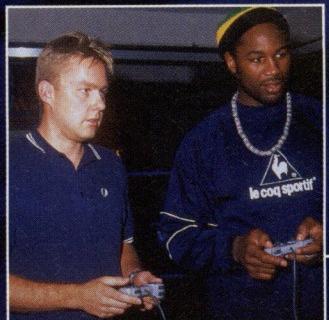
Lennox Lewis is an incredibly laid-back individual. It's difficult to imagine anything getting him annoyed. But **PSM** has seen him fight and knows that some things obviously do. As he explained, however, he keeps his aggression purely for the ring (which was good to know as we challenged him to a few rounds of EA's *Knockout Kings*).

We then started to 'get it on' in the ring with Mr Lewis (there was a PlayStation set up with *Knockout Kings* in the centre of a canvas at Lennox's East London gym). Fighting as one of Lennox's heroes

Muhammed Ali, our editor managed

to put Lennox on his arse a couple of times. "Do you like the game, Lennox?" **PSM** asked nervously. "Yeah, it's good," he says, putting down his joypad, "Let's talk." And with that he headed back to the corner and beckoned us over.

It became apparent that although a fan of *Knockout Kings* (being one of the boxers featured in EA's boxing sim) there were bigger things on his mind. Notably one Mr Holyfield. After a two-year chase, Lewis had finally pinned him down to a time and place where they could attempt to unify the World Boxing Championships. Which was exactly what Lewis did earlier this year. He still needs to work on his game a bit though if he wants to have a rematch with our editor at *Knockout Kings*...



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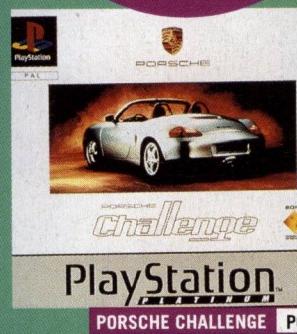


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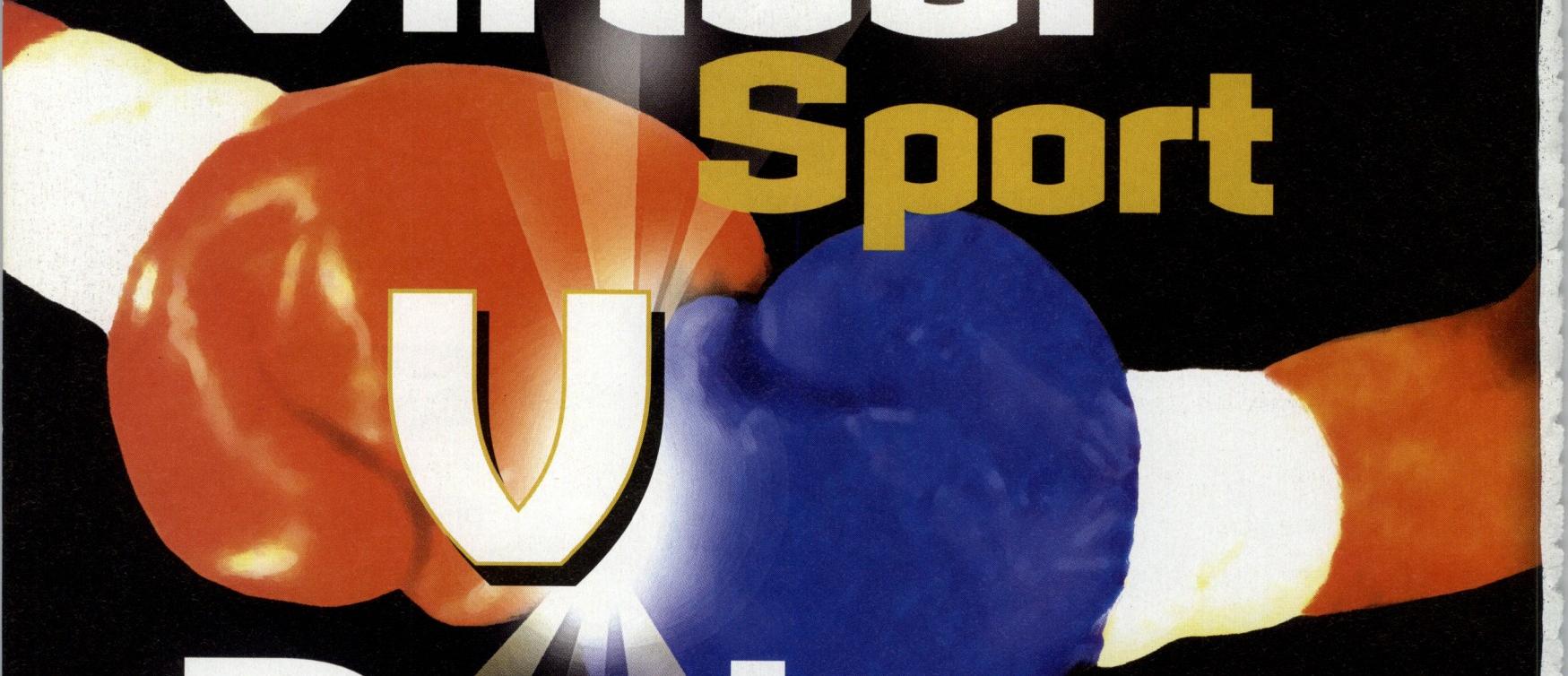
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Virtual Sport

Real Sport



Playing real-life sport has its pros and cons, likewise with PlayStation games. So just who is the champ? Is it playing sport? Or is playing sport on PlayStation? Let's have a good clean fight with no low blows...

ROUND 1

GOLF

TO PLAY THE SPORT YOU'LL NEED...

Lots of balls and a good set of clubs, a caddy and/or one of those buggies. Also, some pastel slacks wouldn't go amiss

TO PLAY THE GAMES YOU'LL NEED...

Copies of *Tiger Woods PGA 2000*, *Everybody's Golf*, *Actua Golf 3*

Golf – the sport of rich, old, retired blokes who wear pastels. The “sport” is walking around a field for a few hours, and then hitting a white ball occasionally. The only real fun is if you get to drive the buggy and burn a few donuts down on the greens.

On PlayStation, however, it's loads of fun. This is mainly down to *Everybody's Golf*, which takes away the boring stuff and leaves you with a streamlined game. But even the realistic titles like *Actua Golf* and *Tiger Woods PGA '99* are more exciting than the real thing.

VERDICT: No contest – PlayStation wins outright.

VIRTUAL



REAL



WINNER: PlayStation

ROUND 2

ATHLETICS

TO PLAY THE SPORT YOU'LL NEED...

Running spikes for your shoes, a lot of open spaces, various heavy things to pick up and throw

TO PLAY THE GAMES YOU'LL NEED...

Fingers of steel and *International Track and Field 2000*

Here's a first – a sport that's more painful to play on the PlayStation than to actually get outside and play. This isn't to knock athletics games like *International Track & Field*. It's just that throwing plates (discus) and jumping into sandpits (long jump) isn't going to injure most of us.

However, if you try and play an athletics game on PlayStation, games that are known as the ultimate button mashers, you'll probably find yourself blistering your fingers to the bone. Someone needs to invent a PlayStation athletics game glove.

VERDICT: Running isn't fun but neither are blisters.

VIRTUAL



REAL



WINNER: Sport

ROUND 3

ICE HOCKEY

TO PLAY THE SPORT YOU'LL NEED...

A hell of a lot of padding, razor sharp ice-skates, a mighty big stick and a good dental plan

TO PLAY THE GAMES YOU'LL NEED...

NHL 2000, *NHL Championship 2000*, a multitap and some Dual Shocks

Everyone can kick a soccer ball, shoot hoops or hit a tennis ball, but trying to stand up on ice-skates is hard enough. And with people trying to knock you down and a puck flying around your head at 100kmh, you're looking at a very tough sport.

PlayStation has a lot of great titles out there: *NHL 2000* is your “arcade sim” featuring fast gameplay and big hits, while *NHL Championship 2000* reproduces the feel of an NHL season. Luckily, for 99.99% of the gaming population, you don't have to be a fan to enjoy these games.

VERDICT: PlayStation wins on penalties (and safety).

VIRTUAL



REAL



WINNER: PlayStation

ROUND 4

SNOWBOARDING

TO PLAY THE SPORT YOU'LL NEED...

A nice new snowboard and thousands of dollars worth of designer snow-wear labels

TO PLAY THE GAMES YOU'LL NEED...

Cool Boarders 1-4, *ESPN Pro Boarder*

After the runaway success of *Cool Boarders 1*, PlayStation found itself swamped with snowboarding games, including three more *Cool Boarders*! There was also the usual array of imitators, but *Cool Boarders 1-4* were a blast, and gave those of us who hadn't snowboarded the chance to try it without pain or embarrassment.

The only thing is, boarding has to be done in real life to be really appreciated. Even if you suck it's still fun! If you happen to be good at it, then tearing up the snow will be more important to you than hygiene.

VERDICT: Life's more fun if you take risks occasionally.

VIRTUAL



REAL



WINNER: Sport

ROUND 5

BASKETBALL

TO PLAY THE SPORT YOU'LL NEED...

A good pair of shoes with ankle support, a basketball, a couple of friends, headband for the "old school" look

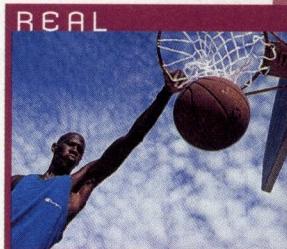
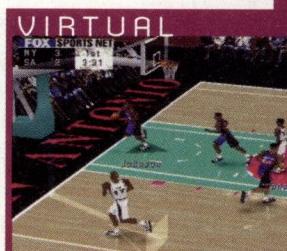
TO PLAY THE GAMES YOU'LL NEED...

A copy of either *NBA Live 2000* or *NBA Showtime*, a multitap, some Dual Shocks

The problem with basketball is identical to that of soccer – the sport is great, but so are the PlayStation games. *NBA Live 2000*, *NBA Showtime*, *NBA Pro '99*... all quality. But is the feeling you get from the games up there with throwing a two-handed double-pump tomahawk dunk on some fool then walking off with his girlfriend after the game? Of course not. But how many of us can claim to perform these moves?

Oh, and in real life you're not going to get the chance to play one-on-one against Michael Jordan. Ever.

VERDICT: If you can throw it down, nothing compares.



WINNER: PlayStation

ROUND 7

CRICKET

TO PLAY THE SPORT YOU'LL NEED...

Pads, a bat, someone to bowl to you/bat against you, and most importantly, a protector

TO PLAY THE GAMES YOU'LL NEED...

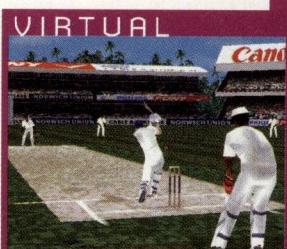
Shane Warne Cricket, a multitap, a few extra Dual Shocks and some cricket fans

Almost every kid in Australia asked for a cricket product as a Chrissie present, and as long as guys like Warnie are in the public eye, the popularity of cricket shouldn't die.

The only problem is when you start playing the sport. If you're batting, it's great! Ditto bowling. But for the rest of the time, fielding or waiting to bat, it's a complete bore.

If you're playing *Shane Warne Cricket*, these yawns are eliminated. Plus there's the bonus that you can face Glenn McGrath and not have to change shorts after each delivery.

VERDICT: Don't watch grass grow – use your console.



WINNER: PlayStation

ROUND 6

SOCCER

TO PLAY THE SPORT YOU'LL NEED...

Soccer boots, some shin guards, around 100,000 British hooligans

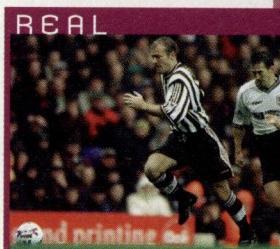
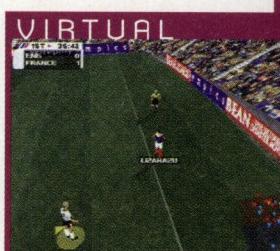
TO PLAY THE GAMES YOU'LL NEED...

A copy of *FIFA 2000*, *ISS Evolution*, a multitap, seven other hooligans brandishing their own PlayStation controllers

Got a soccer ball and one working leg? Then you can play. Having two legs is advantageous, as well as having some coordination and balance. There's also not as much body contact (intentional anyway) compared to AFL or rugby, which is good for young, delicate bones.

PlayStation owners are spoilt by the amount of quality soccer titles on the system. *FIFA 2000* and *ISS Evolution* are the kings of the castle right now. Most soccer fans agree that *ISS Pro* is the number one, even without the mighty *FIFA* license.

VERDICT: The sport rules, the games rule...



WINNER: DRAW

ROUND 8

RUGBY

TO PLAY THE SPORT YOU'LL NEED...

Football boots, cauliflower ears. If you're playing against the French or New Zealanders, get eye protection

TO PLAY THE GAMES YOU'LL NEED...

Jonah Lomu Rugby

Rugby is a great outdoor sport that most kids get into at one time or another. It involves kicking balls and slamming people into the ground – all the activities they love.

Because most games come out of America and Japan, there's only been one PlayStation rugby game so far – *Jonah Lomu Rugby*. The graphics weren't great, but the game was fun.

Still, the actual feeling of tackling someone into the sideline can't be reproduced on a console yet. We'll have to wait for the PlayStation 2's body suit peripheral for that.

VERDICT: Get into the sun and throw your pals around.



WINNER: Sport

ROUND 9

TEENNIS

TO PLAY THE SPORT YOU'LL NEED...

A tennis racket, a court and a partner. You can't play this game alone (unless you like competing against concrete walls)

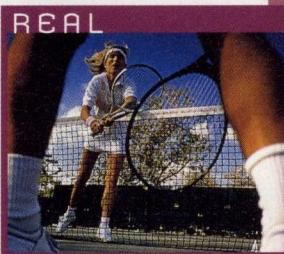
TO PLAY THE GAMES YOU'LL NEED...

All-Star Tennis, Actua Tennis, Anna Kournikova Smash Court Tennis. A multitap is essential

Just look at all the beautiful people who get into tennis – for the girls there's Andre, Pat and Mark, while for the guys there's only one name worth mentioning, and that's Anna.

Anna is also the main reason that tennis loses out to PlayStation. You see, Miss K has leant her name to one of the best sporting games ever, *Anna Kournikova Smash Court Tennis*. At first glance it might not look great but the gameplay is addictive, and with three friends you can indulge in doubles action. You'll be playing this for hours on end.

VERDICT: Tennis is the best sport to lose to PlayStation.



WINNER: PlayStation

ROUND 11

AFL

TO PLAY THE SPORT YOU'LL NEED...

Football boots, long socks, tight shorts

TO PLAY THE GAMES YOU'LL NEED...

AFL '99, a multitap and some extra Dual Shocks

Getting outside and kicking a footy is an old Aussie pastime that's rivalled only by getting outside and drinking VB. Running around a park with a few of your mates and a brand new leather football is one of the best experiences a kid can have. Sure, it might lead to the occasional laceration, but remember, scars are cool, and they impress chicks...

When it comes to recreating the AFL experience on PlayStation, *AFL '99* is the only game available. While it's fun enough, it doesn't compare to planting two knees in your mate's back and skying over him for an amazing mark.

VERDICT: You won't get sick of booting a real footy.



WINNER: Sport

FINAL SCORE AT END OF PLAY: PlayStation 7

ROUND 10

SKATEBOARDING

TO PLAY THE SPORT YOU'LL NEED...

A pair of long, baggy shorts, a disregard for public property, a new skateboard that looks 10 years old and a pair of Vans

TO PLAY THE GAMES YOU'LL NEED...

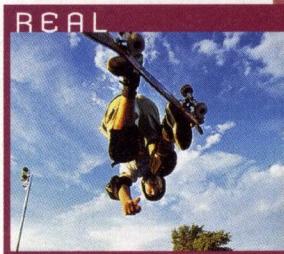
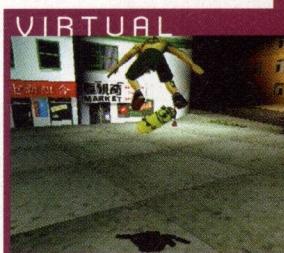
Thrasher: Skate and Destroy and *Tony Hawk's Skateboarding*

Skinned knees, busted elbows, cracked skulls. These are just a few of the treats in store when trying to perform a new skateboard trick.

Even if you do manage to do the occasional 360-McTwist, you've still got to find a place to practice without drawing the wrath of the "establishment" by using buildings and car parks to express yourself.

On PlayStation things are easier. If you fall flat, it's no biggie. Ollied off a police car and worried about the ramifications? Hey, in the world of PlayStation this is encouraged!

VERDICT: As fun as the real thing, but with no injuries.



WINNER: PlayStation

ROUND 12

BOXING

TO PLAY THE SPORT YOU'LL NEED...

Biceps and no brains

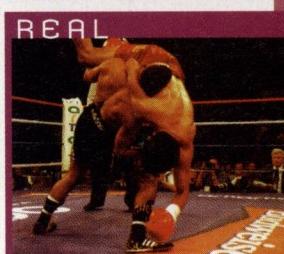
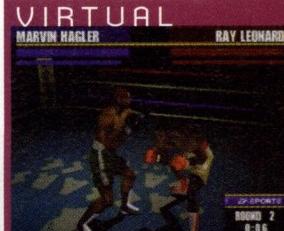
TO PLAY THE GAMES YOU'LL NEED...

Knockout Kings 2000, Victory Boxing 2

While quite a few sports feature big hits or body contact, boxing revolves around being punched around your head and kidneys until someone falls over. Unless you're Mike Tyson and can ask for \$10mil a fight, you're generally asking for a lot of pain when you get in the ring.

In the past, boxing games have been just as painful to play. *Victory Boxing* and its sequel were just poor games. *Knockout Kings* looked good, but was too technical. Now that *Knockout Kings 2000* has been released and *Prince Naseem Boxing* is on the way, boxing is making a comeback on PlayStation.

VERDICT: Being hit in the head is never a good thing.

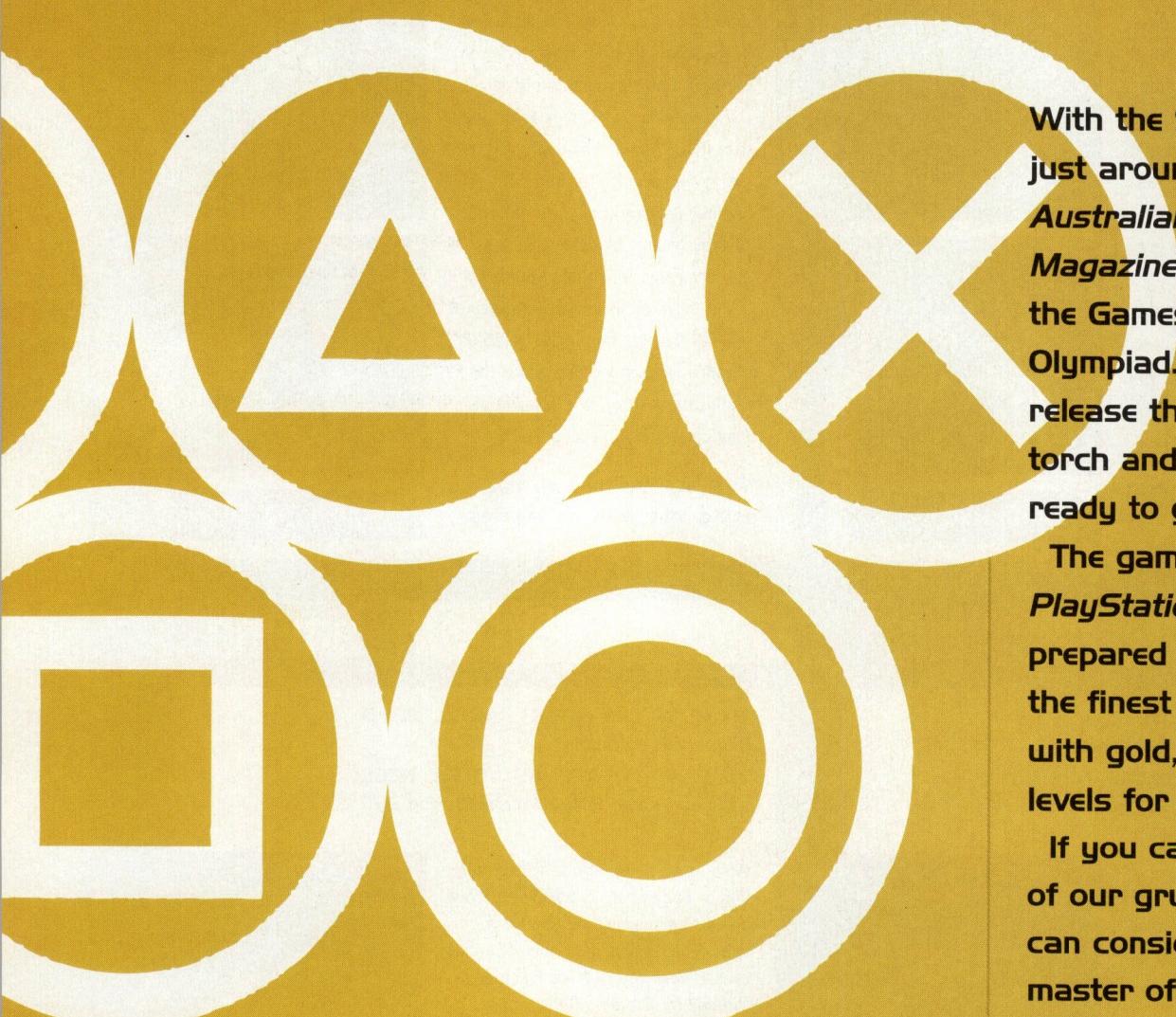


WINNER: PlayStation

Play some real sports and you may appreciate PlayStation sports more!

7 Sport 4 (+ one draw)

The PlayStation Olympics



With the Sydney 2000 games just around the corner, *Official Australian PlayStation Magazine* is proud to present the Games of the PlayStation Olympiad. Sound the trumpets, release the doves, light up the torch and get your fingers ready to go for gold!

The gaming gurus at *PlayStation Magazine* have prepared challenges for 10 of the finest sport simulations, with gold, silver and bronze levels for you to achieve.

If you can grab gold in any of our gruelling sports, you can consider yourself a master of the game and right up there with the best in the country. Scoring a silver medal is outstanding, and a bronze is excellent. We'd love to hear from you if you achieve gold in all 10 events, you could possibly be the best armchair athlete in the world!

On your marks, get set... let the games begin!

WIN! Loads of Great Sports Games

ISS Pro Evolution, International Track and Field 2, Le Mans 24 Hours, This Is Soccer, and F1 2000 games up for grabs.

International Track and Field



What Olympics would be complete without the track and field events?

International Track and Field is an hilariously fun sports simulation available on the Platinum label. You and three other mates can compete at once, pounding your joypad buttons as you try and break the world record in 11 different events.

But how do you compare against the gaming Gods at *PlayStation Magazine*? If you can achieve gold in any of the following events, consider yourself a world champion. Here are the marks to beat.

High Jump

- Gold: 2.8m

- Silver: 2.6

- Bronze: 2.2

Shot Put

- Gold: 27m

- Silver: 25.5

- Bronze: 23

Javelin

- Gold: 107m

- Silver: 100

- Bronze: 90

100m Freestyle

- Gold: 40 sec

- Silver: 45

- Bronze: 50

100m Dash

- Gold: 7.40 sec

- Silver: 7.70

- Bronze: 8.20

110m Hurdles

- Gold: 8.8 sec

- Silver: 9.5

- Bronze: 11

Long Jump

- Gold: 11m

- Silver: 10

- Bronze: 8

Hammer Throw

- Gold: 107m

- Silver: 100

- Bronze: 90

Triple Jump

- Gold: 21m

- Silver: 20

- Bronze: 18

Pole Vault

- Gold: 7.6m

- Silver: 7.4

- Bronze: 7.0

Discus

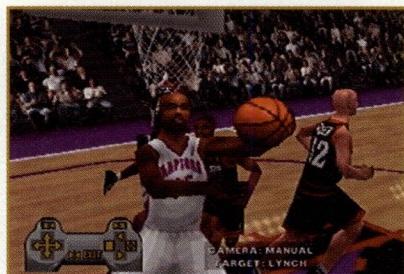
- Gold: 90m

- Silver: 80

- Bronze: 70



6 NBA Live 2000



NBA Live has, for countless years, been the King of the Hoops, the premier five-on-five basketball simulation. The latest version is classiest package yet.

The challenge: Choose the one-on-one game, superstar difficulty setting, first player to 11, loser's outs, using Allen Iverson of Philadelphia 76ers.

- Gold: Beat Michael Jordan of 90's All-Stars
- Silver: Beat Kevin Garnett of Minnesota Timberwolves
- Bronze: Beat Andrew Gaze of San Antonio Spurs

7 FIFA World Cup '98

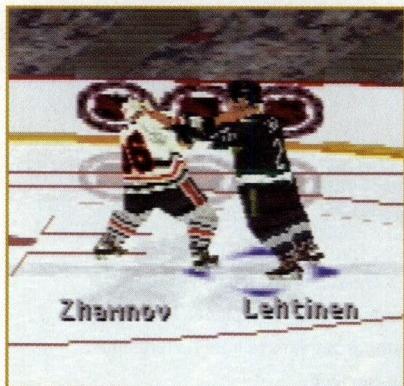


With EA's trademark superlative presentation, *FIFA* is the most popular soccer simulation on the market.

The challenge: Win the World Cup as Australia on world class difficulty level, trying to concede as few goals as possible.

- Gold: 4 goals
- Silver: 8
- Bronze: 12

8 NHL Face Off 2000



We might not play very much ice hockey in Australia, but we know a brilliant PlayStation game when we play one. *NHL Face Off 2000* combines outstanding presentation with addictive gameplay.

The challenge: Using the Detroit Red Wings, beat the Dallas Stars in a Shootout.

- Gold: Win on All-Star level
- Silver: Win on Rookie level
- Bronze: Win on Beginner level

9 Cool Boarders 2



This Platinum 'boarding simulation lets you tear down the slopes at blistering speed and pull off gnarly tricks.

The challenge: Get the fastest possible time for the Bear in the Forest Course, while still getting a total points score of more than 4500.

- Gold: 130.000 sec
- Silver: 135.000
- Bronze: 140.000

10

Formula One '97



Still our favourite in the popular F1 racing series, Formula One 97 is out on Platinum and offers an incredibly realistic and demanding driving experience.

The challenge: Racing as Damon Hill, complete the Silverstone track as fast as possible

● Gold: 1.20.00

● Silver: 1.25.00

● Bronze: 1.30.00

International Track and Field Goldfingers

Can't qualify, let alone get a medal? Here are some tips for perfecting each event in *International Track and Field*.

100m Dash

Tap Square and/or Circle rapidly. Press X to lean forward at the end of the race.

110m Hurdles

Tap Square and/or Circle rapidly and press X to jump the hurdles.

Long Jump

Tap Square and/or Circle rapidly before you reach the foul line, then hold X until the angle is reached then release. A 45-degree angle is best.

Triple Jump

Tap Square and/or Circle rapidly. Press X before the foul line to jump. Press X again as you come down for the second jump. Press



X until you hit a 45 degree angle for the final jump.

High Jump

Tap Square and/or Circle rapidly. Press and hold X to jump. Release after you clear the bar.

Pole Vault

Tap Square and/or Circle rapidly. The pole will plant. Hold X to get your body over the bar. Release X to kick your legs over.

Hammer Throw

Tap Square and/or Circle rapidly. Press X when you start the fourth spin. Release when you reach a 45-degree angle.

Javelin

Tap Square and/or Circle rapidly. Hold X as you approach the start and release at 45 degrees.

Discus

Tap Square and/or Circle rapidly. Hold X at the second spin. Release X at 45 degrees.

Shot Put

Tap Square and/or Circle rapidly. Press and hold X when you get near the front of the circle. Release X at 45 degrees.

100m Freestyle

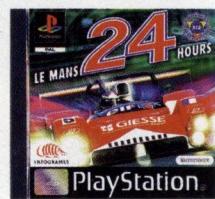
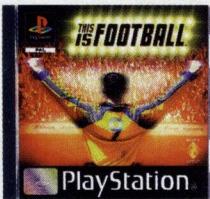
Tap Square and/or Circle rapidly. Press X just before the 50m wall to turn around.

WIN!

These five great games

Simply tell us your favourite three sports games in order of preference, and why the best one is so great – in less than 25 words. The best five entries all receive a copy of *International Track and Field 2*, *ISS Pro Evolution*, *This Is Soccer* plus copies of *Le Mans 24 Hours* and *F1 World Grand Prix*. Fill in your answers on the coupon opposite and you'll be in with a chance!

Thanks to the lovely people at Sony, Ozisoft and GT Interactive for the prizes.



Conditions of Entry

- Instructions on "How to Enter" form part of these Conditions of Entry. Entry is open to residents of Australia, other than employees of ACP Publishing Pty Limited and their associated agencies and families.
- Competition opens 8 March 2000 and closes last mail 30 April 2000. Enter by using an original coupon as provided in issue *Official Australian PlayStation Sports Special* on sale 8 March 2000. The winning entries will be drawn at 54 Park St, Sydney NSW, on 1 May 2000 by a representative of *Official Australian PlayStation Magazine* at 11am. All entries become the property of ACP Publishing Pty Limited, the promoter, 54 Park Street, Sydney, NSW 1028, and may be used in future marketing promotions. All entries are to be sent to GPO BOX 4089.
- The judges' decision in relation to any aspect of the condition will be final and binding on every person who enters. No correspondence will be entered into. No responsibility is accepted for late, lost or misdirected mail.
- Total prize value is \$2250. Prize is not transferable or redeemable for cash. Any change in value of the prize occurring between publishing date and date the prize is claimed is not the responsibility of the promoter.
- Prize winners will be notified by security post and published in the June issue of *Official Australian PlayStation Magazine* on sale 31 May 2000.

My votes are as follows:

Gold:

Silver:

Bronze:

Why?

name:

age:

address:

postcode:

state:

Send entries to: PlayStation Olympics,
Official PlayStation Magazine, PO Box 4089, Sydney NSW 1028



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P L A Y T E S T

Sports Review

Five of the biggest games in the sports world.



EDITOR
ROB PEGLEY

EVERY SINGLE SPORTS GAME can be found in this issue, covered in some depth, so it was difficult to pin down the five games we wanted to highlight in the reviews section. First up is *Anna Kournikova Smash Court*. If you look past the glamourous licence it doesn't look like anything special, but this has, perhaps, provided more fun in the *Official Australian PlayStation Magazine* office than any other single game so far this year. Possibly the best two-player game on PlayStation, it shouldn't be missed.

Cool Boarders 3 gets into the frame because it encapsulates much of the PlayStation's appeal in one title. A (relatively) new and trendy sport with an exciting lifestyle feel, together with flash graphics and bags of fun.

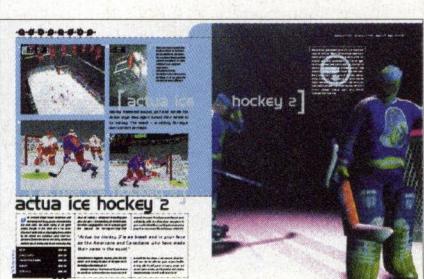
We had to include *AFL '99*. It isn't the best sports game out there, but any totally Australian title warrants a place. No matter that the final product isn't quite the finished article, the fact that PlayStation is catering for our particular tastes has to be applauded and encouraged. And it's still a fun game.

FIFA 2000 doesn't quite hit the mark either, but as one of the best-selling sports titles around the world it just has to be included.

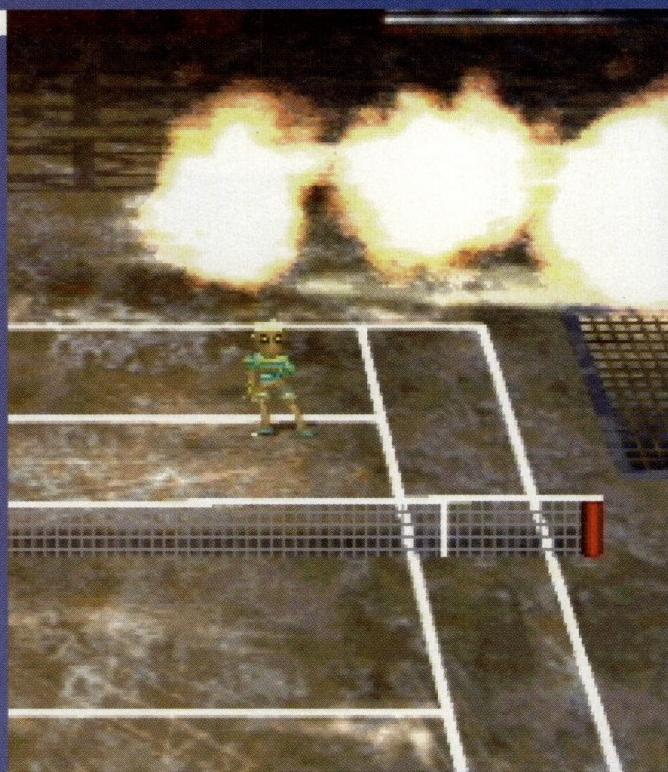
And finally *Actua Ice Hockey 2*. A sport you would probably never play in real life and rarely watch on television, but it's great to play on PlayStation. Read the review, play the demo and see if you're hooked. If you aren't there are hundreds of other sports games out there...

Rob Pegley

GRAPHICS
GAMEPLAY
LIFESPAN

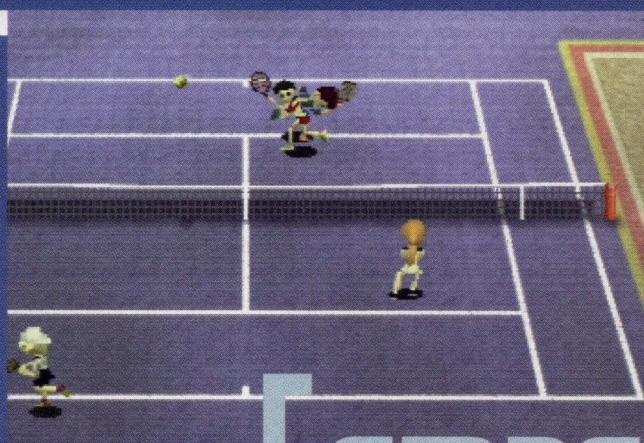
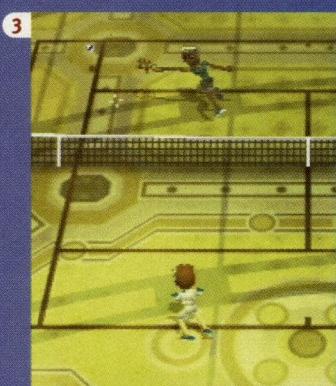


P L A Y T E S T



- 1 WANT A SERIOUS TENNIS SIM? FORGET ABOUT IT.
- 2 YOU GET TO SEE ANNA IN FMV SEQUENCES. DOESN'T SHE LOOK SWEET?
- 3 THE GRAPHICS ARE VERY SIMPLE BUT THERE ARE PLENTY OF NICE TOUCHES.
- 4 PLAYING ON COBBLESTONES IS NOT SOMETHING ANNA AND HER TENNIS CHUMS NORMALLY GET TO EXPERIENCE...
- 5 ...IN FACT THERE SEEMS NO END TO THE SURFACES THAT YOU CAN PLAY ON.

Okay, so the players don't all look exactly like Anna (or even remotely like her for that matter) but don't let that confuse you – this is a truly great PlayStation game.



smash

anna kournikova's smash court tennis

John McEnroe. The angry man of tennis. In his heyday you either loved him or loathed him; the tennis god's on-court antics tore supporters' camps and families apart. Not only was he a player of unparalleled genius, but he was also

a character to be reckoned with. His dynamic and forceful personality spilt over into the verbals or racquet abuse regularly displayed on the grass making Wimbledon's moral guardians drop their strawberries and cream in horror.

Perhaps surprisingly, 'the brat's' spirit lives on today, not only in his own feisty spirit, which is still occasionally displayed in competition, but more importantly in *Anna Kournikova's Smash Court*

Tennis. While other PlayStation games play by the rules, reducing tennis to the fast-paced dull serving duel that is the modern men's game, *Smash Court* is, by turns, naughty, silly, nasty and – ultimately – superb entertainment.

With the evolution of the PlayStation and its games in mind, creator Ken Kutaragi couldn't have foreseen that five years on we'd still be playing flat sprite-based games that have more in common with

"Smash Court is, by turns, naughty, silly, nasty and – ultimately – superb entertainment"

BIG W	\$58.94
GRACE BROS	\$59.95
HARVEY NORMAN	\$59.95
KMART	\$58.95
TOYS R US	\$58.99



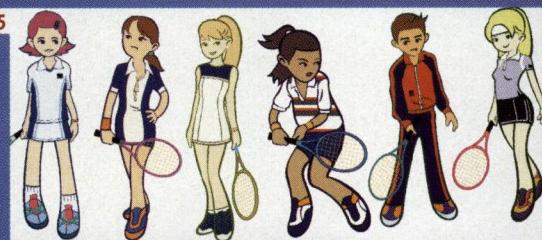
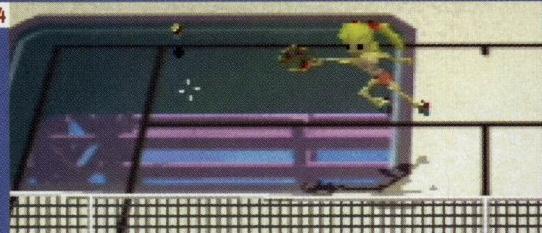
THERE ARE SOME GAMES THAT DON'T LOOK VERY SPECIAL AND YET SOMETIME TURN OUT TO BE THE MOST ADDICTIVE ENTERTAINMENT YOU COULD EVER IMAGINE. SIMPLE IDEAS THAT DON'T NEED ELABORATE CHARACTERS AND STORYLINES, BUT JUST CRY OUT FOR YOU TO HAVE 'ONE MORE GO'. GAMES LIKE PACMAN, TETRIS AND GALAXIANS. TO THAT LIST SHOULD BE ADDED ANNA KOURNIKOVA'S SMASH COURT. YOU CAN'T STOP PLAYING IT, ESPECIALLY IN TWO-PLAYER MODE. IT'S LIKE AN EXCITING AND VARIED VERSION OF PONG BUT WITH HEAPS MORE FUN.

court tennis]



on the demo

In our demo you get to play as one of several players both against the computer or against a mate. You can play a couple of games in Exhibition mode on the overly green grass of the US. Within minutes of your first game you'll be addicted and keen to buy the full game.



Often when it comes to sports sims the key is to get the 'feel' of the sport right rather than the look. *Anna Kournikova* does exactly that.

- 1 FOUR-PLAYER MODE IS FANTASTIC FUN.
- 2 JUST LIKE IN REAL TENNIS YOU CAN BLAME YOUR PARTNER IF YOU LOSE AT DOUBLES.
- 3 PLAYERS DIVE AND STRETCH TO RETURN THE BALL.
- 4 PLAYING ON THE GREAT BARRIER REEF!
- 5 HERE ARE SOME OF THE PLAYERS FROM THE GAME.
- 6 PLAYING IN CHINA SEEMS SOMETHING STRANGE...
- 7 ...PLAYING ON SAND IS EVEN MORE PECULIAR.
- 8 THE OPTIONS SCREENS ARE SO EASY TO USE.
- 9 OKAY, SO THEY'RE NOT AGASSI AND DAVENPORT, BUT WHO CARES?

[smash court]

or try...

NAMCO'S SMASH COURT

★★★★★

ALL STAR TENNIS

★★★★

SAMPRAS EXTREME

★★★

Pong than *Metal Gear Solid*. And yet here we are with a game which, despite its cartoon styling and vast range of options and secrets, asks only the bare minimum of your console. True, it's technically a giant leap from the original *Smash Court Tennis*, but

"It may lack the stunning graphics of the competition, there's just something about the new *Smash Court* that means Anna has you in a vice-like grip"

that's not saying much: *Smash Court* looks like an arcade machine of the late Eighties or a console title of the early Nineties. So why should you put down *Gran Turismo 2* or *Resident Evil 3* for, of all things, a tennis game? One word: Namco.

As creator of the *Tekken* and *Ridge Racer* series, a bosom pal of Sony and one of the great coin-op manufacturers of all time, Namco has the knack of producing highly original and incredibly playable games. And while it may lack the stunning high-tech

graphics of the competition, there's just something about the new *Smash Court* that means that Anna has you in a vice-like grasp early on. As with its brethren, it niggles, worries, tempts and taunts you until you must master its every eccentricity. In *Ridge*

Racer 4, it's the monster powerslide that haunts you, and in *Tekken* it's those skull-cracking combos, but *Smash Court*'s special hook is the thunderous down-the-line winner. As with every tennis game, your position relative to the ball when you play a stroke determines the kind of shot that pings off your racquet. But *Smash Court* pays just as much attention to which button you press, the height of the ball and how you hold the D-pad. Given enough practice, you can produce sweet half-volleys, overhead bats, slicing returns, muffled drop-shots and impossibly bendy top-spin cross-courters that leave your opponent eating lawn.

Playing alone you'll have plenty of time to master the Tournament mode, trying to amass novelty items or unlock secret characters (the player roster can be

WHAT'S IT LIKE AFTER AN



Where's Anna? And who are all these strange little sprites running about the court? And why are they playing on cobblestones? This isn't at all what I was expecting, but I quite like it...

WHAT'S IT LIKE AFTER A



This is the best game ever! Easy to get into and great to play. Who cares if it doesn't look like the sport – this is just hysterical and extremely addictive. I love it!

WHAT'S IT LIKE AFTER A



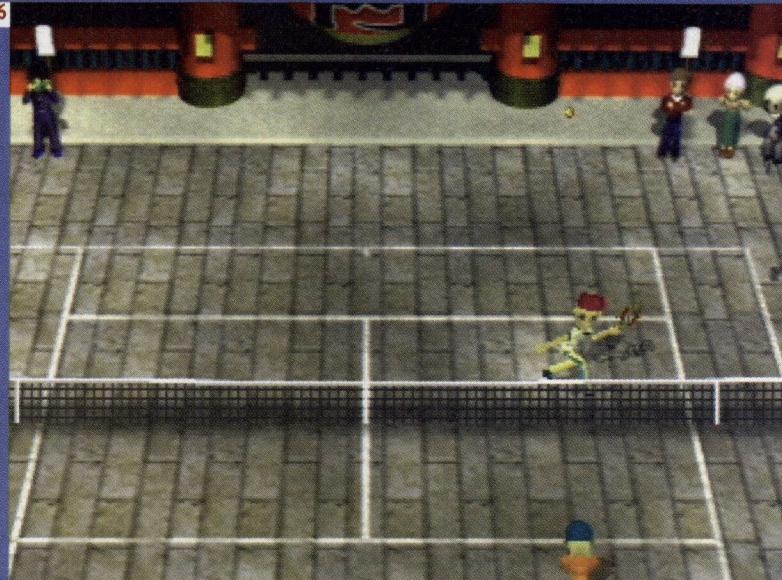
By now you'll have learned the nuances of the game and which are the best shots to use – you'll be an expert. The real fun now is to be had in two-player games.

WHAT'S IT LIKE AFTER A



Not only after a month, but after a year of playing this you'll still go back to it again and again. It's such a great party game and one that a like-minded mate can play with you forever!

HOUR



7

DAY



WEEK

8

MONTH



9

steering wheel



dual shock



no. of players



memory card



link cable



analog



multitap



NeGcon



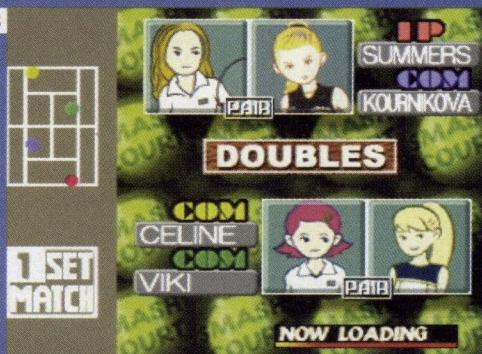
mouse



gun



tennis]



doubled from 24 to 48). As a quirky aside from the game proper, Namco has also included 'Smash Blast', in which the ball becomes a time bomb that eventually explodes in a cartoon fashion. There's also a Practice mode, but the real action is to be had in Exhibition mode. With three pals and a Multi Tap, *Smash Court* becomes the game to play after a night out. Or nights in. Or the morning after. It's crying out for multi-player thrashing, and, unlike the similarly-social *Circuit Breakers*, it's challenging and exciting for just one or two players as well.

"Like the brat himself, *Smash Court*'s brash exterior and occasionally awkward playing style will, for some, be a bit of a turn-off"

Like the brat himself, *Smash Court*'s brash exterior and occasionally awkward playing style will, for some, be a bit of a turn-off. And apart from the odd video clip or change of costume, the licence doesn't bring a lot to this particular party (although Miss Kournikova's Lolita-esque charms might lure in

a few punters). No, the real appeal of *Smash Court* is the ability of something so simple to create such emotion, drama and excitement. Tennis players of today, please take note.



FOR TIPS ON THIS GAME PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 68 NOW



verdict

GRAPHICS

★★★ Cute, but very retro

GAMEPLAY

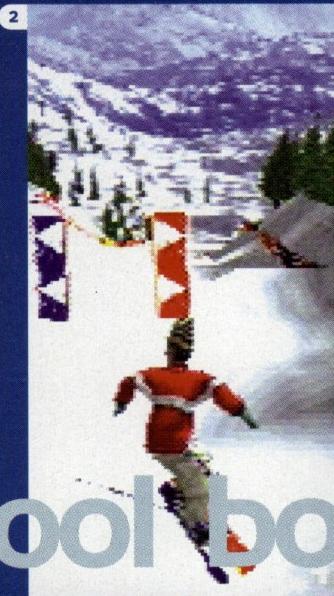
★★★★★ Mindless, addictive and brilliant

LIFESPAN

★★★★★ Tough and with tons of secrets

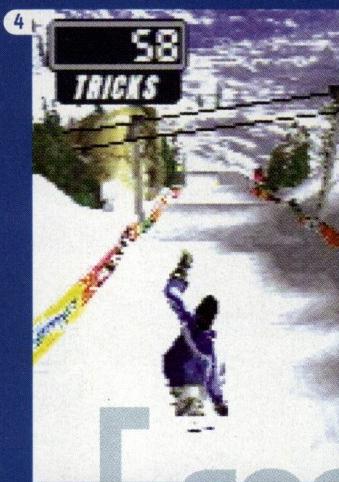
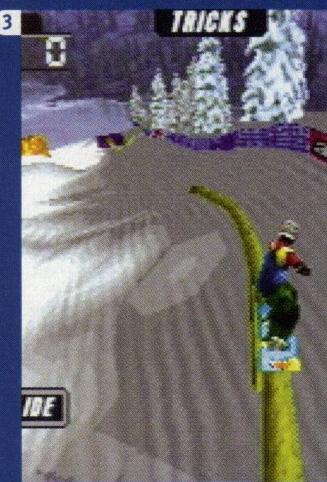
OVERALL: Its retro styling and innate cruelty isn't going to appeal to everyone, but, in our opinion, this is an arcade gem. Forget real tennis, when it comes to the court sport this is where real genius lies. ★★★★★

PLAY TEST



- 1 THE DOWNHILL COURSE IS A MIX OF SPEED AND TRICKS.
- 2 IN SLALOM, YOU FORGET THE TRICKS AND UP THE SPEED.
- 3 RAIL SLIDES ARE SURPRISINGLY EASY ONCE YOU'VE GOT THE KNACK OF THEM.
- 4 A FEEBLE ATTEMPT AT A TRICK.
- 5 STUNTS LOOK GREAT WHEN YOU PULL THEM OFF. NOT SO GOOD WHEN YOU DON'T...

'Misty', 'fakie', 'half-pipe'. Do these mean anything to you? Don't worry, all will become clear...



cool boarders

cool boarders 3]

cool boarders 3

Close, but no banana. This third outing of the *Cool Boarders* series is, without question, the best snowboarding game on the PlayStation. In the visual department it shows up its predecessors' low-fi aesthetic inadequacies with its own smooth, well-designed courses. Not only has it been improved graphically, but it's a better

game to play, too, with its Half Pipe tracks being the best of any snowboarding game, on any format. In fact, almost every moment is one of pure enjoyment. *Cool Boarders 3* is a genuinely superb game whether you're playing alone or with mates.

"Almost every moment is one of pure enjoyment. *Cool Boarders 3* is a genuinely superb game"

Why then, you may ask, haven't we awarded it the top accolade? What's the problem?

We have issues, not with what *Cool Boarders 3* offers, but rather what it doesn't. For example, the courses take longer to load than we'd like. Not a

huge gripe, admittedly, but while playing a tournament packed with relatively short Half Pipe, Slalom and Downhill tracks, its many interludes for disc access are enough to irritate. Similarly, the need to re-load its stylised front end, only to return

moments later to the same course, smacks of idiocy and ignorance combined. Why not have a simple option that asks: "Quick menus - on/off?"

Another niggle is that it has a ludicrously steep learning curve and doesn't clearly state which

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3]

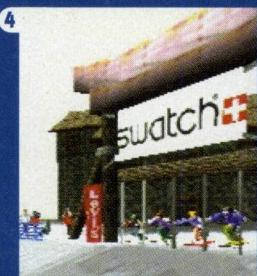
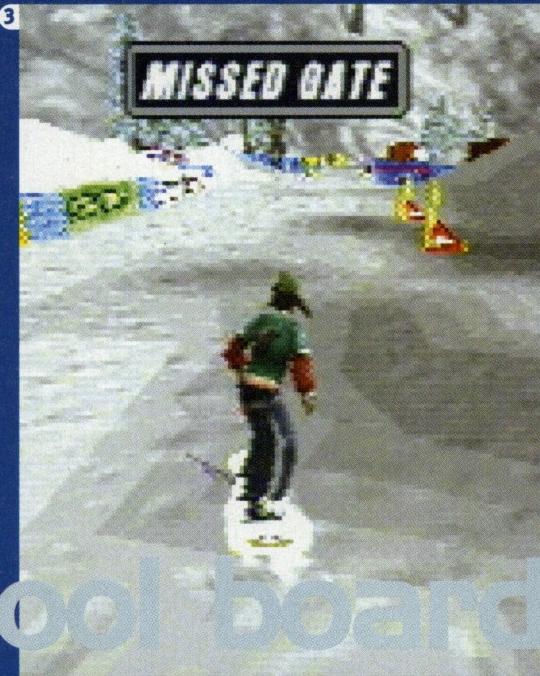


THE SEARCH FOR THE PERFECT SNOWBOARDING GAME IS AN ENDLESS ONE, AND *COOL BOARDERS 3* IS AS CLOSE AS ANYONE HAS YET COME. *TRICK 'N SNOWBOARDER* AND *MTV SNOWBOARDING* HAVE ALL TRIED TO TAKE THE COVETED CROWN, BUT NOTHING YET HAS MATCHED THE THRILL AND EXCITEMENT OF THIS GAME. SNOWBOARDING IS, OF COURSE, THE PERFECT SPORT FOR PLAYSTATION, BECAUSE THE SPORT'S TRENDY, YOUNG FOLLOWERS WITH THEIR DESIGNER CLOTHES ARE THE IMAGE THAT SONY HAS ALWAYS PLACED PLAYSTATION ALONGSIDE. *COOL BOARDERS 4* WILL BE THE LATEST GAME TO TRY AND GET THE FORMULA JUST RIGHT, BUT HERE IS ITS FAMOUS PREDECESSOR.



on the demo

You only get to try a small portion of the whole game on the demo but it certainly gives you a feel of the thrill and excitement you can expect from the finished article. One thing to look out for in the demo is the ability to throw punches at your opponents as you're racing.



- 1 JUMPING OVER CARS IS, ADMITTEDLY, NOT YOUR NORMAL RUN ON THE PISTE.
- 2 THE WORLD CAN LOOK VERY DIFFERENT FROM HERE.
- 3 BOARDER X HAS YOU TAKING ON GATES AND TRICKS.
- 4 COOL SPONSORS.
- 5 NOW THIS IS A JUMP!
- 6 AND THIS IS EVEN BETTER!
- 7 GOOD ATTEMPT AT A MISTY RESULTING IN 250 POINTS.

coolboardERS 3

Snowboarding is the perfect sport for PlayStation – new, exciting, trendy and sometimes dangerous...

or try...

COOL BOARDERS 2

★★★

TRICK 'N SNOWBOARDER

★★★

MTV SNOWBOARDING

★★★

course is next when you choose your board during a tournament (an important decision). While on the subject of its tournaments, the omission of a restart race option is bloody-mindedness itself. You can save your position between each event, but you

two-player support. It is understandable that its split-screen mode only supports the predictable, linear racing of its Down Hill, Boarder X and Slalom events. Indeed, there's little merit for having a simultaneous Half Pipe mode. But why is there no

their presence makes *Cool Boarders 3* that little bit less enjoyable to play. And that's a damn shame, as it gets most things so very right.

The downhill events – Slope Style, Boarder X, Slalom and, predictably, Downhill – are unlike the basic and uninspiring races offered by other snowboarding games. The design of each course is nigh-on perfect, satiating every snowboarding appetite you have. If you want tricks, there are plenty of ramps, makeshift or otherwise, from which to leap. There are rails to slide along, banks to scale... The only limit to your desire to impress others or yourself is your own imagination and skill – and practice makes perfect. Conversely, should a fast-paced race through winding scenery be so desired, *Cool Boarders 3* also obliges.

"On the subject of its tournaments, the omission or a restart race option is bloody-mindedness itself"

can't simply replay a course you've just messed up. Rather, you have to suffer the inconvenience of quitting and reloading. Why make it so difficult?

But worst of all, the Half Pipe courses – the icing on the *Cool Boarders 3* cake – have no 'true'

easily-accessible high score table – a means by which a group of players can judge performance? Such a basic concept's absence is lamentable.

Individually, each criticism could be described as relatively insignificant, or even petty. Yet, as a whole

WHAT'S IT LIKE AFTER AN**HOUR**

First play and you're hooked, especially if you're already a fan of snowboarding or winter sports. It looks so real and the sense of excitement is just like the actual sport.

WHAT'S IT LIKE AFTER A**DAY**

Still having fun, your times are improving and you're learning loads of tricks. You've tried all the courses and played against friends in vicious two-player races.

WHAT'S IT LIKE AFTER A**WEEK**

There might be a sense of getting a little bored with things after a week as you start to repeat some of the same things over and over. It's still great in two-player mode though.

WHAT'S IT LIKE AFTER A**MONTH**

Not the sort of game you become obsessed with, *Cool Boarders 3* is nevertheless still the sort of game to get out when friends come round. Loads of fun to be had still.

6 POINTS**TRICKS****528****FADE****MISTY****7 REMAINING****250****POINTS****TRICKS****MISTY****5**

steering wheel



dual shock



no. of players



memory card



link cable



analog



multitap



NeGcon



mouse



gun



The Half Pipe and Big Air events concentrate on tricks and stunts and it's through playing these that you will appreciate the subtlety of *Cool Boarders 3*'s

Air is a simple leap, repeated three mildly engaging times with successful stunts eliciting appropriate pointage, but the Half Pipe is of a different class.

For the want of a little bit of feedback from the relevant testing department, *Cool Boarders 3* shall be forever categorised as "superb" rather than "sublime". You'll need an analogue gamepad and a modicum of patience to get the very best out of it but, prior to *Cool Boarders 4*, this is the best of its kind on offer. And we defy anyone to not be even a little bit smitten with its fantastic interpretation of the Half Pipe event...

"There are several Half Pipe courses to play on and we love each and every one"

control system, especially if you are using an analogue pad. At first it appears unforgiving and leaden, but practice reveals its intuitive nature. Big

Mixing tricks for points, it is a glorious union of skill and creativity. There are several Half Pipe courses to play on and we love each and every one.

FOR TIPS ON THIS GAME PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 72 NOW

verdict

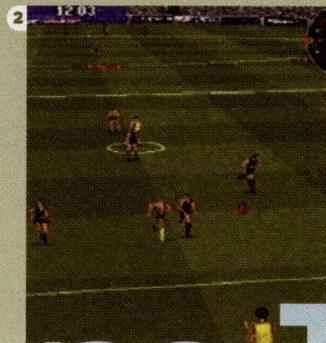
GRAPHICS Best seen in a *Cool Boarders* game so far

GAMEPLAY Great fun and loads of different stuff to try

LIFESPAN Plenty of stuff to play through here

OVERALL: A little more thought and care would have made this indispensable. As it is it's merely excellent. As such, it's more than worth a gander. So what are you waiting for? Go try it.

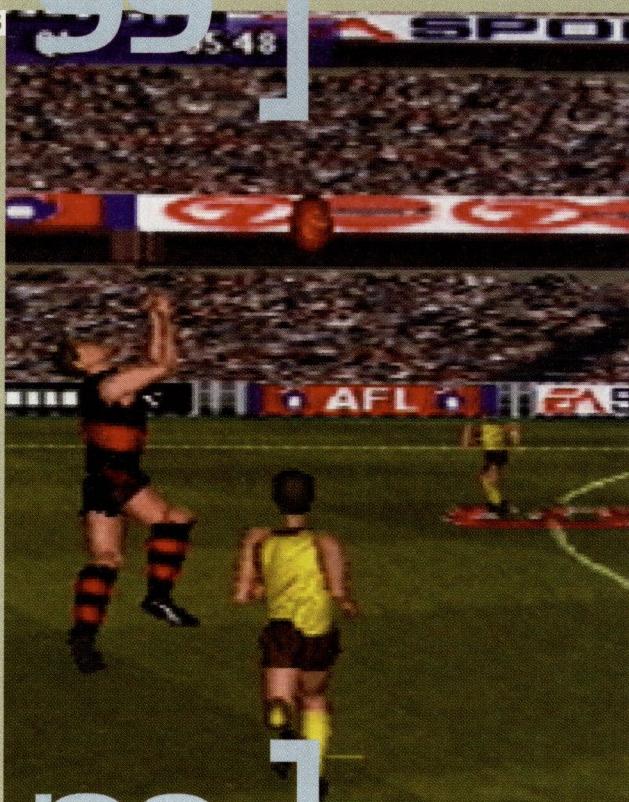
P + L + A + Y + T + E + S + T



- 1 FROM HERE YOU CAN SELECT TEAMS, CHANGE STATS AND PICK LINE-UPS AND SO ON.
- 2 THOSE PITCH MARKINGS LOOK PRETTY ACCURATE.
- 3 STRANGELY, THE MAN BEHIND IN THE CONTEST HAS AN ADVANTAGE.
- 4 WINNING RUCK CONTESTS IS VITAL TO GET FIRST BALL USE.
- 5 HIRD ABOUT TO TAKE A SPECY.



All 16 AFL teams are represented, each with a full 42-player squad to choose from



afl '99

[afl '99]

For hundreds of thousands of Australians, our national game is a religion. Countless fans spend their weekends screaming on the outer with a meat pie in hand and footy scarf around the neck to keep out the cool winter breeze. There's something about Australian Rules Football that inspires the most incredible zealous passion amongst its many devoted fans.

It's this passion that's lacking from EA's first Australian Rules simulation for the PlayStation. It's a workmanlike effort and loads of fun, especially with friends, but *AFL '99* doesn't appear to have received

there are no team management options, player trading, tactical options or player injuries, and player stats don't change according to your team's progress throughout the season.

"It's loads of fun, but *AFL '99* doesn't appear to have received the attention the licence deserves"

the attention as the licence deserves, or that gets lavished upon *FIFA* or *NBA* titles.

All 16 AFL teams are represented, each with a full 42-player squad to choose from. Every player is rated according to speed, tackling, kicking and so on. You can change these attributes to make super teams of giants, or weak teams of midgets. Sadly,

You can choose from a training game, a single exhibition game, a pre-season knockout comp like the Ansett Cup, a premiership season or a knockout final series. Beginners should start in the training or exhibition modes because most will find it very tough to beat the computer. Fortunately, you can also change the level of difficulty using a slider in

BIG W	\$48.94
GRACE BROS	\$49.95
HARVEY NORMAN	\$49.95
KMART	\$58.95
TOYS R US	\$49.97

IT'S TRULY AMAZING THAT AN AUSSIE RULES GAME WAS CREATED FOR PLAYSTATION, AND WE SHOULD TRULY GIVE THANKS TO THE GOD OF EA SPORTS FOR DOING IT. NORMALLY FOR A GAME TO BE RELEASED ON PLAYSTATION IT HAS TO HAVE GLOBAL APPEAL BEFORE THE BEAN-COUNTERS WILL GIVE THE THUMBS UP TO THE PROJECT. CRICKET, RUGBY UNION AND LEAGUE ARE ALL MARGINAL IN THIS RESPECT. SO IMAGINE WHEN SOMEONE AT EA SUGGESTED DOING A SIM FOR A SPORT THAT ISN'T JUST POPULAR IN ONE COUNTRY, BUT VIRTUALLY ONLY WITHIN ONE AREA OF THAT COUNTRY! SOMEHOW THEY AGREED TO IT AND WHOEVER IT WAS THAT SAID 'YES' WE APPLAUD YOU.



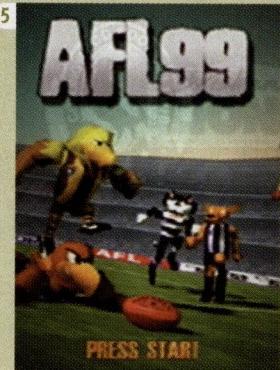
on the demo

Sorry, no dice with this one. Unfortunately there is no demo of AFL 99 for you to try out. Your best bet is to rent the game if you're not sure about buying it and see what you think. But we figure that unless you're an AFL fan then you aren't likely to be interested. If you are an AFL fan then what are you waiting for?



afl '99

The umpire decisions often seem too arbitrary but, luckily, they don't affect the game too much, and dodgy umpiring just adds to the realism



- 1 THIS IS A GREAT WAY TO WATCH THE ACTION.
- 2 THE MARKS CAN BE PRETTY SPECTACULAR.
- 3 THE BOUNCE STARTS THE MATCH.
- 4 THE STATISTICS COULD HAVE BEEN MUCH MORE COMPREHENSIVE.
- 5 GO ON THEN, GET IN THERE!
- 6 SEEING THOSE POSTS CAN MAKE THE HAIRS ON THE BACK OF YOUR NECK STAND UP ON END.
- 7 READY TO TAKE THE KICK.
- 8 UP YOU GO LADS!
- 9 LOOKS JUST LIKE THE REAL THING DOESN'T IT? EA IS MASTER OF PRESENTATION.
- 10 MIGHT BE WORTH DOING SOME TRAINING FIRST.
- 11 AUSSIE RULES ON THE PLAYSTATION. IT'S A TRULY GREAT THING.

or try...
or

THERE REALLY IS NOTHING QUITE LIKE AFL '99 THAT WE CAN COMPARE IT TO. IT'S A SPORTS SIM LIKE NO OTHER.

the options screen, from inept opposition to reasonably smart AI. This is something the PC version didn't have, and the PlayStation version is miles more beginner friendly because of it. The experienced player can also use a turbo mode.

strategies are needed to win; you can't just run zoom down the field and kick a goal. Controls are reasonably easy to use, and allow handpassing, kicking, tackling, bumping, spoiling, switching players, kicking off the ground and speed bursts.

win marking contests. It's usually easier to take a mark from behind the pack, which is not realistic. However, you can take some very spectacular grabs, even one-handers, on top of an opponent's back.

Another gripe is that it's frustrating to see unmarked players running around. It's especially galling when a centre-half forward takes a mark inside the 50m arc with no opponents within cooee.

The umpire decisions often seem too arbitrary but, luckily, they don't affect the game too much, and dodgy umpiring just adds to the realism!

Presentation is very good, but not in the same league as giants like FIFA. Different stadia are provided such as the MCG and Football Park, but the grandstands are sparsely detailed. It would also have been fantastic if the players could have run

"The speed is realistic with high marking, smothers, bumps, tackles and precision kicking featured here"

The game looks good with its motion-captured players and a 3D virtual stadium. Three other camera viewpoints are provided, but they are unplayable. The speed of the game is realistic with high marking, smothers, bumps, tackles, precision kicking and handballing all featured here. Real

Offensive play is easy to get the hang of, with arrows indicating where your players are located to help you give-off an effective pass or handball. The on-screen radar can also be helpful for locating players or space to run into. But defence is tough: it's hard to force a turnover, to tackle opponents or

WHAT'S IT LIKE AFTER AN

If you're an Aussie Rules fan then you'll spend the first hour with a smile on your face just basking in the fact that your favourite game is available on PlayStation. Isn't life great?

HOUR

WHAT'S IT LIKE AFTER A

You're hooked. Playing Aussie Rules on PlayStation is just like the real thing, all that's missing is a bottle of VB, a meat pie and a few thousands cheering lunatics.

DAY

WHAT'S IT LIKE AFTER A

You're now an accomplished player and have found a few niggles that don't sit quite right with the game. Let's hope the sequel irons out a few of these problems.

WEEK

WHAT'S IT LIKE AFTER A

After a month or so, AFL '99 isn't the sort of addictive title that you just can't put down, but it is the sort of game that is perfect for when a group of mates come round after the pub.

MONTH

**COMPETITION OPTIONS**

Exhibition Training
Pre-Season Premiership
Final 8



11 Q1 07:02



steering wheel



dual shock



no. of players



memory card



link cable



analog



multitap



NeGcon



mouse



gun

through a giant banner held up by the cheer squad, something that is unique to the game. And where are the club songs that are so universally loved?

Channel Seven's Bruce McAvaney provides play-by-play commentary, while "Lethal" Leigh Matthews offers banal comments at the start and end of the game. The commentary is reasonable but a long way from being "special". Bruce just too often gets it wrong. Take a clean mark and McAvaney will say "an unkind bounce!" And after kicking a behind, McAvaney will enthuse: "That will be handy, they

need all the goals they can get." Huh? It's also a little disappointing there are no instant replays. And where are the Mr Bean-like antics of the umpires?

And for a final whinge, we also think the match statistics are a little ordinary, best players and goal kickers should be featured.

Games against friends are hugely addictive. Decking opponents behind the ball with the shirtfront button is especially satisfying. But PSM has some reservations about four-player games: AFL doesn't really suit four-player action as well as titles

like *Smash Court Tennis*. It gets a bit over-crowded and chaotic with everyone vying for a piece of the Sherrin. Stick to two players and you'll have a ball.

AFL '99 has plenty of scope for improvement, and is not the screamer it could have been. But the game is great fun nonetheless. When the weather is too cold to strap on the boots and kick the Sherrin around the backyard, this is an excellent substitute, especially with a friend around.



FOR TIPS ON THIS GAME PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 71 NOW

**verdict****GRAPHICS** ★★★★ Good, but a little rough around the edges.**GAMEPLAY** ★★★★★ Loads of fun, especially with a friend.**LIFESPAN** ★★★★ Endless multi-player thrills, but more limited alone.

OVERALL: AFL '99 is another winning sports sim from EA, with the added novelty and appeal of Aussie Rules. We can't help feeling it could have been better, but it's plenty of fun for fans of our great game. ★★★★



fifa 2000

It's the world's best-selling soccer game. But is it the world's *best* soccer game? Find out here...



- 1 GOOD CHEST SKILLS FROM THE FELLA IN STRIPES.
- 2 GREAT SAVE KEEPER!
- 3 GOAL CELEBRATION NUMBER 57, THE ARCHER WITH HIS BOW.
- 4 PRACTISE YOUR CORNERS IN TRAINING.
- 5 ISN'T THAT THE REFEREE HAVING A SHOT AT GOAL?

fifa 2000

Maybe it's symptomatic of the way the game of soccer is heading, but this latest edition to the *FIFA* family – while undoubtedly the most advanced in the series – is also, unfortunately, the least enjoyable. It's almost as if EA Sports has compiled a list of everything people associate with the sport, fed it into a super-computer and simply churned out *FIFA 2000* as a result.

It has all the teams, players that occasionally resemble their real-life counterparts, tournaments, and the requisite selection of tricks, traps and shots. This 'by numbers' approach also stretches to the

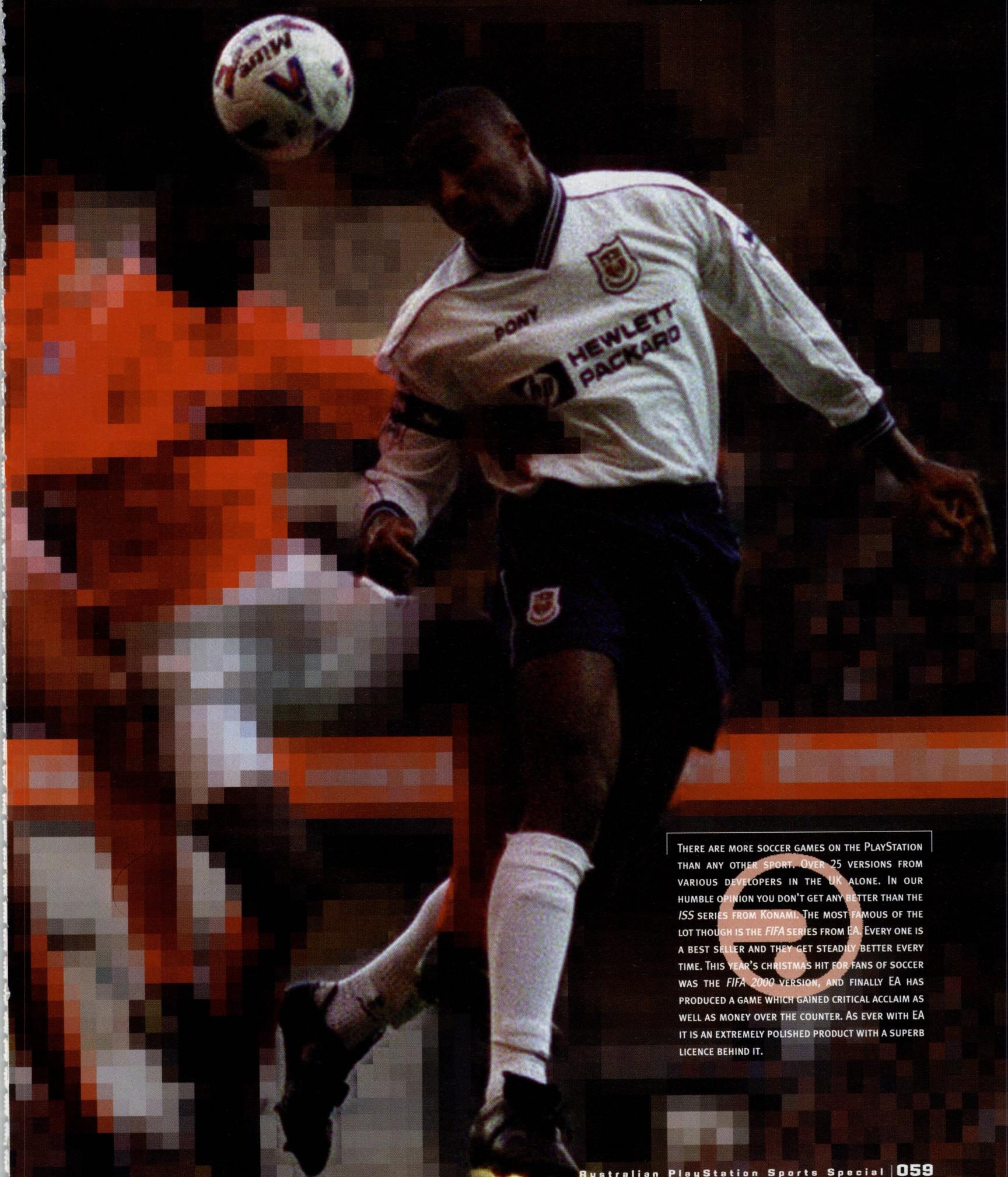
While EA would say that many hours of work have gone into creating a truly realistic soccer spectacle, something that is more accessible than its forebears, but the problem remains that *FIFA 2000*

"Despite all the attendant glamour, *FIFA 2000* lacks a real soccer brain"

famous EA sporting 'experience'. The 'laddism' associated with being a soccer fan is backed up by a rocking Robbie Williams intro song and the digitised crowds roar, jeer and chant to emphasise their appreciation of the foot-to-ball skills on show. Yet, despite all the attendant glamour, *FIFA 2000* lacks a real soccer brain.

plays just like the forerunners with very little new on offer. This would be fine in isolation because *FIFA '99* and the *World Cup* titles are good efforts, but Konami's forthcoming and much anticipated *ISS Pro Evolution* has upped the ante considerably. *FIFA 2000* looks flat and already aged by comparison and, crucially, it even struggles to keep

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HARVEY NORMAN	\$79.95
KMART	\$88.95
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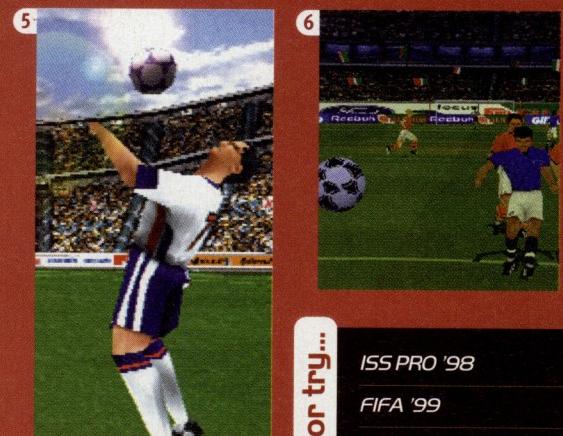
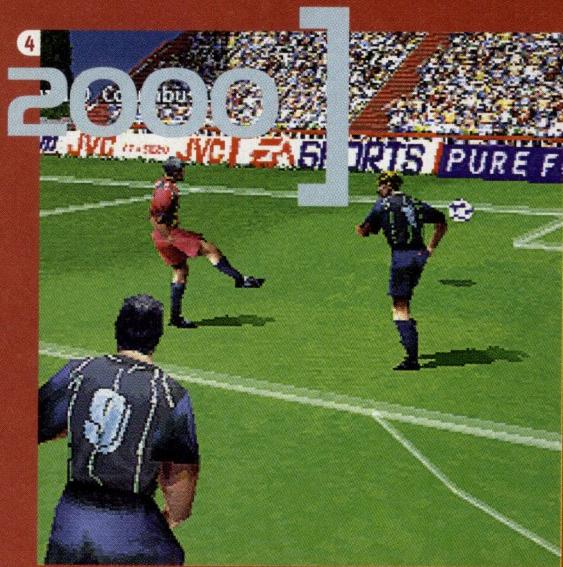


THERE ARE MORE SOCCER GAMES ON THE PLAYSTATION THAN ANY OTHER SPORT. OVER 25 VERSIONS FROM VARIOUS DEVELOPERS IN THE UK ALONE. IN OUR HUMBLE OPINION YOU DON'T GET ANY BETTER THAN THE *ISS* SERIES FROM KONAMI. THE MOST FAMOUS OF THE LOT THOUGH IS THE *FIFA* SERIES FROM EA. EVERY ONE IS A BEST SELLER AND THEY GET STEADILY BETTER EVERY TIME. THIS YEAR'S CHRISTMAS HIT FOR FANS OF SOCCER WAS THE *FIFA 2000* VERSION, AND FINALLY EA HAS PRODUCED A GAME WHICH GAINED CRITICAL ACCLAIM AS WELL AS MONEY OVER THE COUNTER. AS EVER WITH EA IT IS AN EXTREMELY POLISHED PRODUCT WITH A SUPERB LICENCE BEHIND IT.



on the demo

In our demo you can replay the 1999 European Cup Final of Manchester United vs Bayern Munich. Will Sheringham and Solskjaer score last minute winners for The Reds? Only you can tell as you put your *FIFA* skills to the test for the first time. It's a great demo and may send you back for more...



or try...

*ISS PRO '98**FIFA '99**ACTUA SOCCER*

★★★★★

★★★★

★★★

up with its own prequels when it comes to fluid soccer gameplay.

There are two reasons for this. First of all, the game lacks pace. Players prefer to stroll into position, and, even after the most daring runs, rarely

tightest back four – a complete contrast to a move that rarely works in reality.

This means that skill in *FIFA 2000* is about as relevant as sportsmanship in the modern game. While initially you'll spray the ball about, marvelling

"Passes are pinged to feet with an accurate most Premiership managers would sell Grandma's teeth for"

break into a sweat. Painfully unrealistic. Secondly, everything is just too precise. Although passes can be intercepted, they land at the feet with an accuracy most Premiership managers would sell Grandma's teeth for. Balls rarely get knocked into space, and through-balls invariably split even the

at the laser-guided play, you'll soon realise that such infallibility has little lasting appeal. This prissiness even affects the way the game looks. EA has diligently included a number of weather effects, but they lack the imagination to show a wet pitch cutting up as one too many sliding tackles take their toll.

It's a pity *FIFA 2000*'s fundamentals are so routine, because every other aspect is lashed with detail. Particularly the players, who are the stars of the show. No longer are they over-stretched like characters from a Lowry painting. Instead, they look resplendent, with their shirts bursting with detail and the faces of real footballers wrapped around their polygon mesh.

The sound effects are similarly accomplished. Despite the loss of UK soccer commentary ace Des Lynam, the series sticks with *FIFA* stalwarts Motty, Lineker and Lawrenson, all of whom are on top form. Motson handles the trivia, names and describes the on-screen action, while Lawrenson chips in with inane comments, just like he does on UK television's superb *Match of the Day*. Brilliant.

WHAT'S IT LIKE AFTER AN

You'll marvel at the great graphics, the brilliant intro sequences, the options, the licence behind the whole thing and the superb presentation. It looks like the best thing ever.

HOUR**8****WHAT'S IT LIKE AFTER A**

And it doesn't play too badly either once you get going. Lots of skill involved and, overall, it's a reasonable portrayal of soccer. Good fun to play and lots of excitement.

DAY**9****WHAT'S IT LIKE AFTER A**

Then you play a LOT of games and realise there are some fundamental flaws that you just can't get past. If you've ever played *ISS Pro* then these flaws just scream out at you in comparison.

WEEK**10****WHAT'S IT LIKE AFTER A**

For the average sports' fan you'll still get this out for a blast, and there's loads to accomplish in one-player. It just hasn't got the supreme skill factor of *ISS Pro* though.

MONTH**7**

steering wheel



dual shock



no. of players



memory card



link cable



analog



multitap



NeGcon



mouse



gun



However, even clever commentary streaming and swooping camera work cannot compensate for the game's basic and inherent flaws. Pretty soon

Aesthetics aside, little seems to have changed since the last instalment of the great game graced our consoles and television screens. Previously, *FIFA*

Electronic Arts has lost sight of the fact that it is the very unpredictable nature of soccer which makes the game so exciting.

"Clever commentary streaming and swooping camera work cannot compensate for the game's basic flaws"

FIFA 2000 starts to flag quicker than Carlton Palmer at the 70-minute mark on a wet and muddy Saturday in February. Clearly, Electronic Arts needs to rethink the backbone of the *FIFA* engine.

incarnations worked because the over-the-top atmosphere was the icing on a marvellously fluid, knockabout cake. But it just comes over as old hat this time around. Somewhere along the line

As a clinical representation of the sport, *FIFA 2000* is fine – but it's like watching Fox Sports 2 cover Wagga Wagga versus Broken Hill. No one cares. It looks great, but as a lasting and enjoyable game of soccer, *FIFA 2000* has curled around the outside of the post.

FOR TIPS ON THIS GAME PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 79 NOW

**Verdict****GRAPHICS**

★★★★★ Detailed and boasting incredible animation

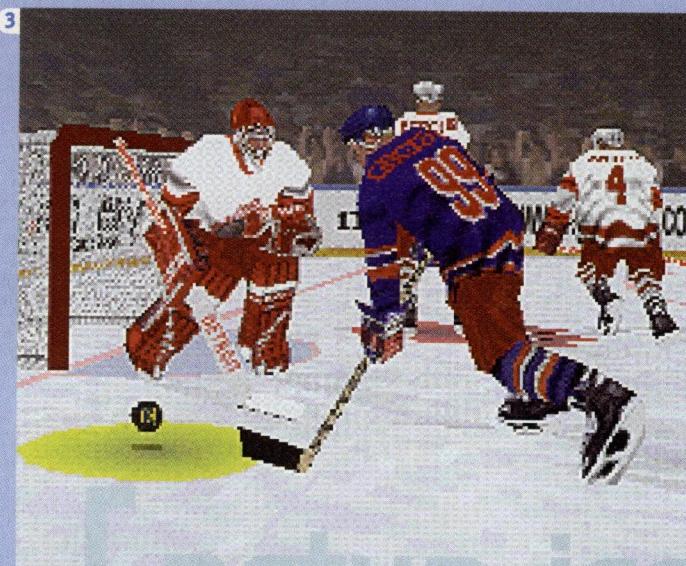
GAMEPLAY

★★★★ Polished and playable but a little too simplistic

LIFESPAN

★★★★ Too precise and limited to provide endless fun

OVERALL: Football by numbers. It's time for *FIFA* to evolve into a game that has great graphics, realistic gameplay and genuine tension and excitement in equal measures. Still a little way to go yet. ★★★★



- 1 THERE ARE SOME REMARKABLE CAMERA ANGLES IN THE GAME, WHICH ADD TO THE SPECTACLE.
- 2 THE ANNOYING COMMENTATORS HANG IN THIS BOX. LET'S HOPE IT DOESN'T FALL INJURING THEM BADLY...
- 3 GOALMOUTH ACTION.
- 4 THE BIGGEST FAULT WITH ACTUA ICE HOCKEY 2 IS THE ABILITY OF PLAYERS TO TACKLE. WEAKLY.

actua ice

Having mastered soccer, golf and tennis the *Actua* boys have again turned their hands to ice hockey. The result – a victory for style over content perhaps.

actua ice hockey 2

The romantic image forever associated with ice hockey is of burly, padded men slamming into each other. The harsh reality of the game proper, though, is that there are a few scant minutes of action followed by lengthy interruptions by the referee and numerous words from 'our' sponsors. Games that should last three, 20-minute sections can, in reality, take hours to actually play.

Actua Ice Hockey 2 compounds everything good about the sport – the slap shots, the ballistic pace, the reflex-twanging skills – into an adequate game that captures the hot-dog-and-large-Coke

names in the sport. The players are bulky and move realistically, while the all-American atmosphere is spot-on with Dick Millard providing the commentary (even if he does sound like Carl Hooper off UK TV's

"Actua Ice Hockey 2 is as brash and in your face as the Americans and Canadians who have made their name in the sport."

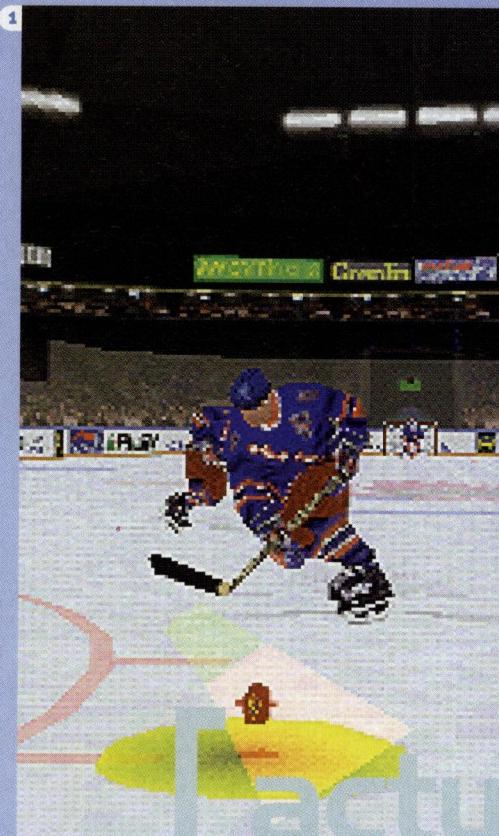
atmosphere of a big game. However, what this title doesn't do is convey the power of the sport and it inevitably suffers because of it.

Actua Ice Hockey 2 is as brash and in your face as the Americans and Canadians who have made their

fantastic *The Fast Show...*) and cameras views that twirl over the ice with the grace of Jane Torville. In fact, with its full gamut of teams, arcade and normal game modes, and impressive stat rosters, *Actua Ice Hockey 2* should really have the lot.

hockey 2]

BASED IN THE RUN-DOWN ENGLISH CITY OF SHEFFIELD, HOME TO *THE FULL MONTY*, GREMLIN HAS BEEN A KEY PLAYER IN THE PLAYSTATION SPORTS SCENE SINCE THE MACHINE WAS FIRST LAUNCHED AT THE END OF 1995. ITS *ACTUA SOCCER* GAMES WERE SOME OF THE FIRST TO MASTER THE TECHNIQUE OF MOTION CAPTURE AND BROUGHT REALISM IN SPORTS GAMES TO A NEW LEVEL. SINCE THEN THERE HAVE BEEN *ACTUA GOLF* GAMES, *ACTUA TENNIS*, A WHOLE SERIES OF *ACTUA SOCCER* TITLES, AND ALSO *ACTUA ICE HOCKEY 2*. ALTHOUGH THE GAMEPLAY NEEDS SOME TWEAKING YOU WILL NOT SEE A BETTER LOOKING SPORTS GAME WITH BETTER PRESENTATION THAN THIS.



on the demo

Play as either the New Jersey Angels or the Toronto Norsemen in our demo of the game. At first you might find the action a little brutal, and, rather than scoring goals, just controlling the puck will be a chore at first. And if you don't get it straight away keep hitting that reset button until you do.

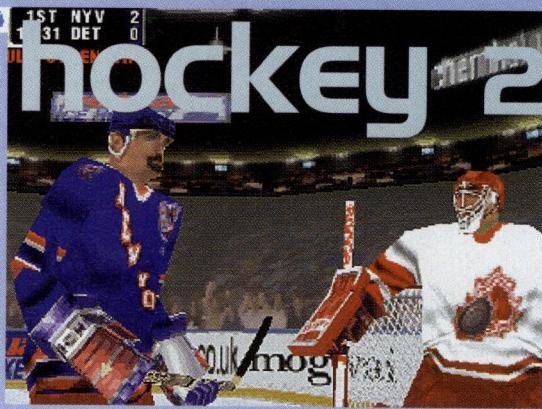


- 1 THE PLAYERS IN FULL FLIGHT ARE AN AWESOME SIGHT.
- 2 IT'S A GOAL. CUE THE CHEESE MUSIC AND FLASHING LIGHTS.
- 3 POSSIBLY THE TIDIEST SPORTS' LOCKER ROOM WE'VE EVER SEEN.
- 4 TWO PLAYERS DISCUSS PHILOSOPHY BETWEEN PLAYS.
- 5 MOODY ATMOSPHERE.
- 6 THE GAME HAS PLENTY OF CONFRONTATION.
- 7 "RIGHT LADS, EVERYBODY OFF THE ICE FOR A TEA BREAK."



You can see from these images alone that this is easily one of the best-looking sports sims ever made. High-quality production.

Actua ice hockey 2



or try...

NHL '99

★★★

NHL FACE OFF '99

★★★

NHL POWERPLAY

★★★

Unfortunately, it doesn't have lasting appeal – the lion's share of that fact is determined by the basic nature of the sport. The compact play area and

missing is any feeling of impact in a tackle. When you consider that this is a vital part of the game – and, as mentioned, always associated with the sport

So it's surely not worth bothering with? Well no, not exactly. Despite the failings in tackling each other there is still more to commend outside of the rough and tumble.

Beside the presentation – which is second to none in terms of sports sims – the fluidity and motion of the players is excellent. The control of movement is also slick and there has been much attention paid to the physics of an ice hockey player and how friction and inertia effect his travel.

If you've never played any ice hockey games before on any format you'll be amazed at the way the players take a while to slow down and speed up just like they would on real ice. In *Actua ice Hockey 2* this replication of movement is spot on. It will take you some time to master that

"While all the attention has been focused on the admittedly stunning presentation, the lack of weighty tackles KOs the game..."

frenetic pace does allow for tight, passing games and impressive shots, but there is so very little variety to the action. The game doesn't 'feel' right either, and this can be levied at the physics used as the players smash into each other. Despite Gremlin's use of a local hockey team for the impressively motion-captured players, what is

– the omission is disappointing. Even more so given that similar charges were also levelled at *Actua Ice Hockey 2*'s predecessor.

Actua Ice Hockey 2 misses the point. While all the attention has been focused on the stunning presentation, the lack of 'weighty' tackles KOs the game like a Wayne Gretzky forearm challenge.

WHAT'S IT LIKE AFTER AN

HOUR



The first time you pick up *Actua Ice Hockey 2* you'll be amazed. It looks like no other ice hockey game and the presentation is up there with the best sports sims ever made.

WHAT'S IT LIKE AFTER A

DAY



By now you're getting pretty proficient. Sussed the movement and how to score goals and you've been working more on your defensive plays. It's all coming together.

WHAT'S IT LIKE AFTER A

WEEK



Things have taken a turn for a worse as you've realised that tackling isn't all it should be. Rather than it being a case of you simply not improving, it's the game that's the problem.

WHAT'S IT LIKE AFTER A

MONTH



You can still have fun with the game after a month and indeed after a year, but you have to put its shortcomings to one side and accept there are innate problems with the gameplay.

5



6

1ST NYV 0

9:10 DET 0

ERPLAY 1:45



7

1ST NYV 2

10:19 DET 0

4 ON 4 1:16



steering wheel



dual shock



no. of players



memory card



link cable



analog



multitap



NeGcon



mouse



gun



element of the play alone though if you're a novice. Scoring goals is also a challenging aspect of the play that borders on difficult. And, again, for novices this

team against the crappiest team from the sunniest place where ice hockey is never played, until you master winning by a ridiculous scoreline. Playing

Where *Actua Ice Hockey 2* struggles, though, is with the seasoned players and reviewers like this. If it is anything but your first experience of the sport on PlayStation then the poor tackling will indeed piss you off. No doubt about it. The ability to slam into players, and conversely to get to a level of skill where you can deal with body slamming techniques is much better in other ice hockey sims. And, for that reason, this is not the game of choice for good players. If you're new to the sport though then this is definitely worth some time on the ice.



"In many ways *Actua Ice Hockey 2* is an ideal title for ice hockey 'virgins' as the poor tackling ability may be more of a help than a hindrance"

crucial element of the game will mean spending some time in one-player mode playing as the best

against mates worse than you is also makes for a fun learning curve!

verdict

GRAPHICS ★★★★ Stunning TV-style presentation.

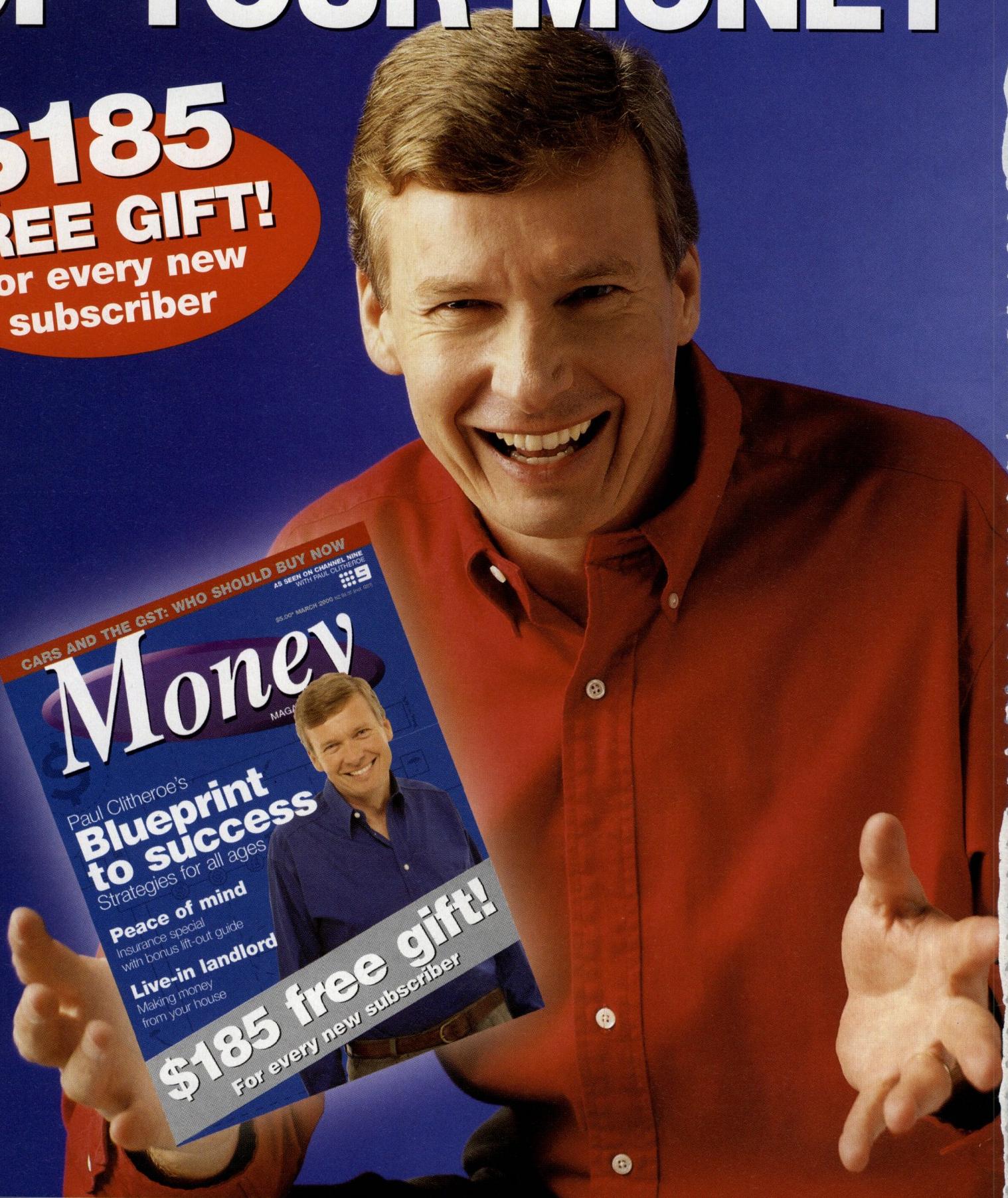
GAMEPLAY ★★★ Everything but the heavy crunch of a tackle.

LIFESPAN ★★★ Curtailed by its lightweight moves.

OVERALL: *Actua Ice Hockey 2* is the ice hockey game equivalent of playing the real thing without wearing a helmet – it's missing one obvious point. The players... There just needs to be more crunch in the plays. ★★★★

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SIXTEEN-PAGE TIPS SUPPLEMENT

The MIGHTY BRAIN

The hottest sports tips service to be found in Australia

AMERICAN FOOTBALL
SKATEBOARDING SNOWBOARDING
TENNIS GOLF BOXING
CRICKET SOCCER

Anna is not only stunning, she's also great fun to play with. Smash Court guru Jason Hill gives you the tips to help out in your love game.

ANNA KOURNIKOVA'S Smash Court Tennis

GENERAL TIPS

You must learn to guide your shots using the positions of the D-pad. Never hit down the middle – always hit wide, whether deep or shallow. But remember the ball's direction will also be affected by the timing of your shot. If you hit the ball early, you'll hook it around, or you'll slice it if you hit too late. You'll also have more power in your shot if you can hit it on the full or on the half volley.

Always be on the move. If you strike a ball from out wide, don't wait to see your opponent's shot, immediately start charging back to the centre of the court. If you have to hit the ball from way out wide, hit a soft \times shot or a lob to give yourself time to get back to the middle.

Never give up. Players dive and often look totally out of position, yet can still get the ball back – and often for a winner! You can even hit the ball occasionally on a second swing!

Don't play a drop shot with \times from more than one step behind the service line, it will always hit the net.

The key to smashing lobs back is timing. Watch the shadow of the ball to judge when to hit. Use \bullet for a hard smash, but \times (a slow smash) can be tricky for human opponents and it will also give you more time to recover if you are expecting your opponent to hit the ball back again.

Forget about the \blacksquare super shot. It's hard to time, AI opponents will only hit back even harder, and it takes too long to recover from. The \blacksquare is the best for volleys when your opponent is back, but only use it when you're sure you're at the net.

Select your character carefully, one that suits your skills. Experienced players will enjoy the characters that have manual controls and allow you control over top spin and slice by using the $R1$ button.

COMPUTER OPPONENT

Computer players are clinical, so you need to play likewise. Follow our guide and you'll win the grand slam.

SERVE

A slow wide serve using \blacktriangle or \times to a computer opponent is best, allowing you time to get to the net if you wish. There's little point in serving fast as the ball comes back harder!

A nifty trick is that some computer opponents are susceptible to a quick wide \blacktriangle button serve as soon as the players take position after changing sides. Some opponents aren't ready and miss the serve point after point.

GENERAL PLAY

When serving, it's simple to get them out of position and get a passing shot away. As after a wide serve you can head towards the net and you can hit it to the other side of the court well out of their reach. If the return comes down the line, do a weak return down the line. Repeat until computer hits one to the middle of the court and then hit a medium shot to the other corner. Easy!

When receiving, drive the ball down the line if the serve is wide and the computer will usually hit to the middle, allowing you an easy put-away to the open court. If the serve is down the middle, try and push your opponent out wide.

Never hit the ball straight to an opponent, particularly with an \times shot – they'll wind up blasting the ball back very hard.

As a beginner, put away the lob – your AI opponent rarely misses the chance to smash them back. But once you're playing better, use the lob providing you are in good position to return it. If they smash it, you'll be able to hit it back even harder, and they'll be out of position.

If you're playing against an AI opponent who charges to the net, it's easier to stay back and blast away a passing shot once you've kept them on a side-to-side run.

When returning serve, try an across court drop shot using \times . Take a step or two back before the serve, then slice the ball across court.

HUMAN OPPONENT

Beating a computer opponent is one thing, but to beat your mates you'll need the full complement of strokes, patience to wait for an opening and a devilish streak. The key to victory is to vary your shots so that you always keep your opponent guessing.

SERVE

Work hard on your service game. Don't just press \blacktriangle – good players will murder you. There are plenty of easy points to be had if you can get aces past your opponent, and you can dictate play rather than having your opponent hit back big returns.

The key is unpredictability and variety. Mix up slow and fast serves,

vary your service position, and change your service direction.

Serving is simple. Toss the ball up, hold a direction and press the button as the ball starts to drop.

Use \blacksquare on first serves to try and ace your opponent. Try serving right down the line from the middle of the court. Or go as wide as you can and serve wide to the opposite side for a fast and difficult-to-return serve.

When your game becomes obvious, do the opposite or try a slow serve.

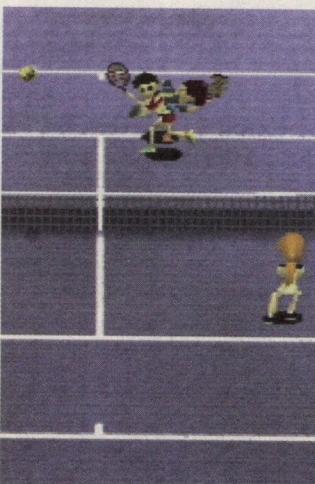
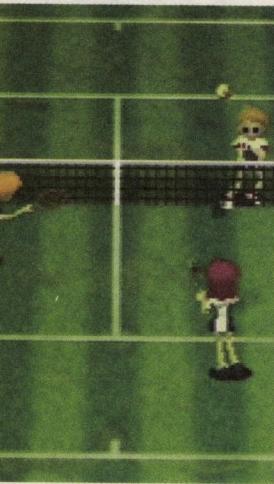
Don't slow serve up the middle, it leaves you vulnerable for a returning winner, with your opponent able to hit wide on either side of the court.

The \blacktriangle serves are the safest second serve, but an \times serve is also easy to pull off, and allows you to slip in a fast second serve.

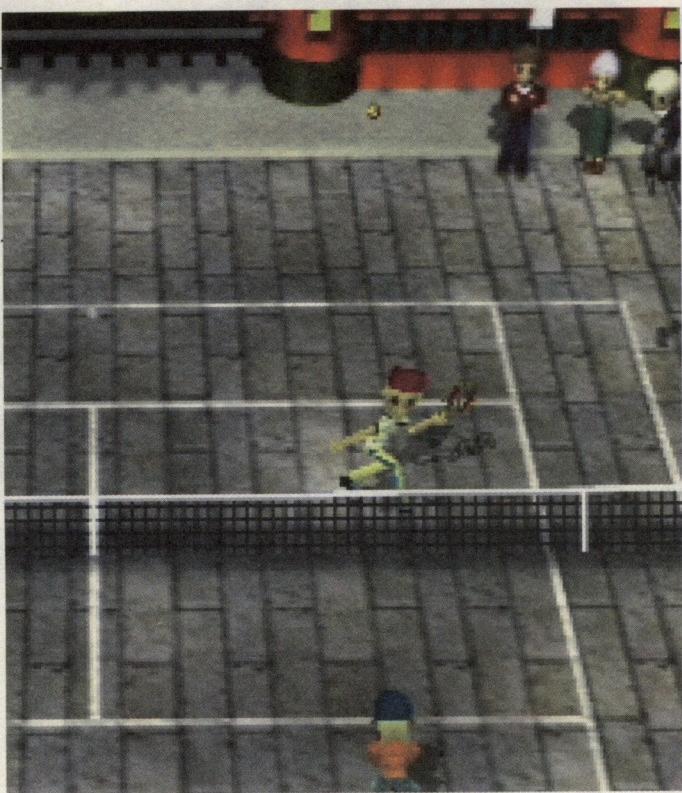
GENERAL PLAY

Variety is the slice of life so mix your wide shots with drops, play from the baseline as well as the net, and use the gamut of strokes available.

The simple serve volley game that you might have perfected against the



CHEATS



computer will not suffice against a mate. A smart opponent will start regularly lobbing over your head as you charge to the net, or smash the return down the line.

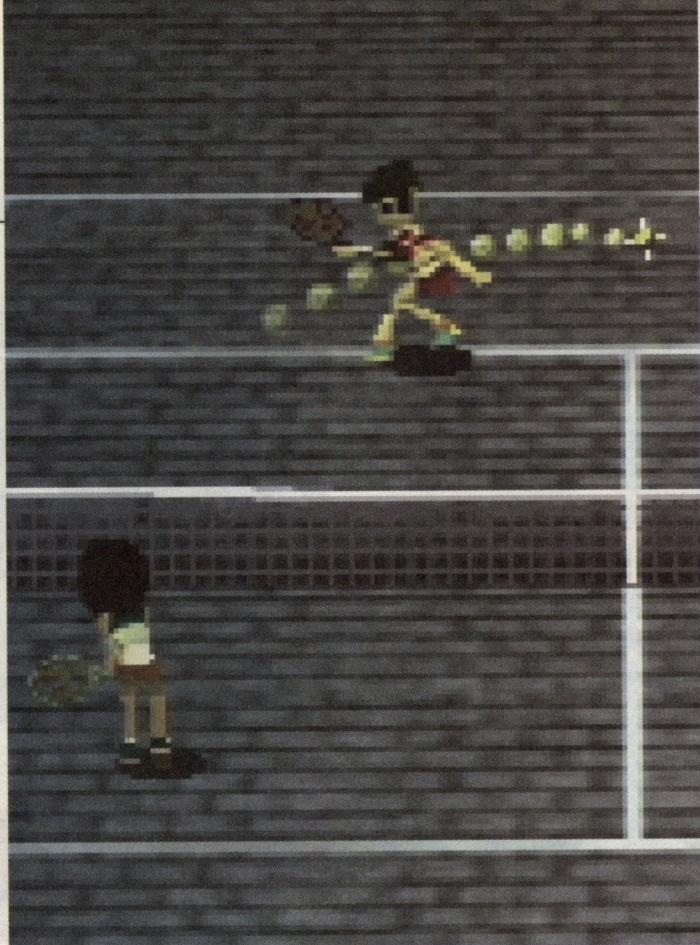
Volleying using ■ when you are standing up to the net are effective against humans, particularly if you butter them up with a deep volley just before. If you can't quite get right to the net, press ✕ instead. And make sure you play them across court, away from your opponent.

When receiving, move behind the baseline and towards the corner. This gives you more chance of returning the serve. Once you become an accomplished player, try standing way back, then charging towards the serve, and belting the ball fast and deep down the line with ●.

Against a beginner, a lob is cheeky but useful, as most players find it hard to time the return. But make sure you vary your lobs between deep, middle and shallow to keep them guessing. A lob is also crucial when you're struggling to get back into position after a wide hit.

When you're on the baseline and your opponent is at the net, drive the ball down the line, pressing forward and to the left or right, or a deep lob. A cross shot will leave your opponent with an empty court to volley into.

Slices and drop shots are handy when your opponent is expecting a deep return. Just press back and left or right as well as ✕. But make sure you hit across court – hitting wide from the side you are on often results in the ball going out.



The super shot takes too long to recover from to be very useful against a human opponent.

TOURNAMENT TIPS

After selecting this option, you're given a list of the players available. Looking at their statistics, you can pick a player best suited to your style of play. Once you've chosen you can not change who you are if you are using a saved game. Selecting a male or female will put you into the men's or women's tournament.

When you win a Grand Slam or Street Tournament, a pink bouncing star will appear next to the event. If you win the event six times this becomes a green star indicating you've won all bonus items. Street Tournaments are best for beginners to start as the standard isn't high.

The Records section shows your ranking, you start off last but as you progress you'll creep up the list. The points you gain allow you to enter different tournaments. For Grand Slams you need to rank 20th, for street tournament you have to have won at least one tournament.

As you win tournaments, you'll also gain points, extra characters and bonus equipment. The more times you win a tournament (up to a maximum of six times) the more items you receive. Press L2 and R2 together on the character select screen to toggle between the normal and extra characters. Most of the extra items are just for fun but some racquets are an improvement on your original equipment. Try pressing R2 with some equipment, like the gold racquet that glints.



SMASH COURT TENNIS

STREET TOURNAMENT	Eddy (<i>Tekken</i>) Reiko (<i>Ridge Racer</i>) Pac-Man
Bonus Characters:	OSAKA BRIDGE
ASAHSAs	Celeste Sasha Clara Red Ace Dragon Heihachi (<i>Tekken</i>)
TEMPLE	Lamar Richard (<i>Time Crisis</i>) Troy
THEME PARK	Owen Acea Robyn Xiaomin Emilie Sam Coach

BONUSES

Yoshimitsu (<i>Tekken</i>) Sherudo	Frying pan Mosquito Afterimage Mirage racquet
GRAND SLAM	USA
Bonus Equipment:	Wave racquet Cola bottle Crimson racquet
GREAT BRITAIN	Hungry chick Footprints Carrot
Fire racquet Silver racquet Starburst racquet Smoking shoes Rainbow racquet Wrestling mask	Gold racquet Tuna fish Invisible ink Light sabre Panda head
FRANCE	Football
Dynamite racquet Electric racquet	

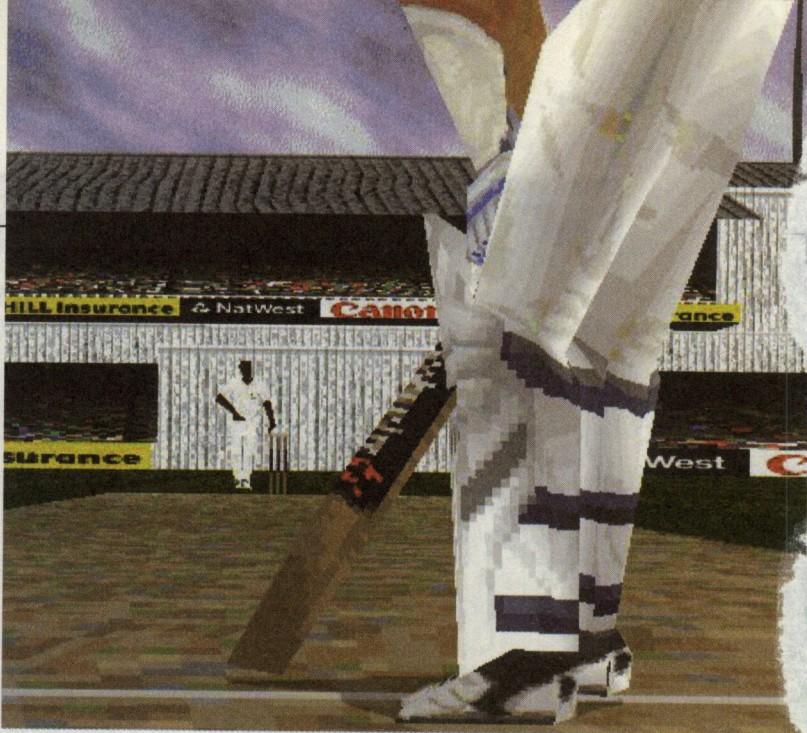
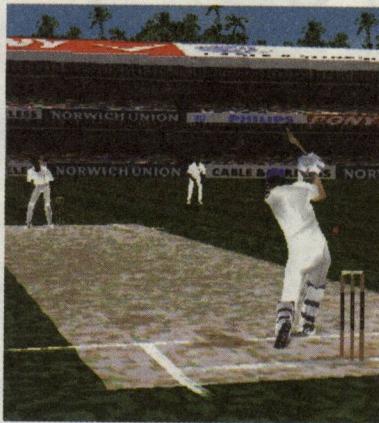
TIPS

the MIGHTY BRAIN



Blag your way into classic matches with these codes:

- To access Match 2, ZIMBABWE Vs ENGLAND 1996, enter: **O, V, E, R, T, I, M, E.**
- To play match 3, WEST INDIES Vs INDIA 1983, enter: **S, A, U, S, A, G, E, S.**
- To have a go at match 4, AUSTRALIA Vs WEST INDIES 1960, enter: **D, I, L, L, B, E, R, T.**
- To get into Match 5, AUSTRALIA Vs ENGLAND 1987, enter: **B, A, T, K, I, N, G, S.**
- To strike out at Match 6 ENGLAND Vs AUSTRALIA 1997, enter: **P, A, N, C, A, K, E, S.**
- To battle Match 7 ENGLAND Vs AUSTRALIA 1948, enter: **F, R, I, E, D, E, G, G.**
- To bowl Match 8 WEST INDIES Vs PAKISTAN, enter: **P, L, A, C, E, B, O, 1.**
- To get stumped on Match 9 ENGLAND Vs AUSTRALIA 1981, enter: **C, L, U, E, L, E, S, S.**
- To field a team in Match 10 PAKISTAN Vs SRI LANKA 1996, enter: **N, O, W, A, Y, E, A, S.**



Shane Warne Cricket '99

**Don't get
bowled over
- cheat!**

BATTING TIPS

Successful batting requires a combination of sound shot selection and precision timing. Skilled players can use the six shot often providing their timing is perfect. But if your timing is out, you will usually get caught.

Any ball in the blockhole can be leg glanced, providing your timing is okay. This is a very effective way of getting boundaries with little risk for an experienced player. A six shot is possible, but you will be bowled if timing is just slightly out.

If the fielders are in, you can get away with playing loads of six shots. Even if your timing is out, the ball will usually go over the fieldsmen.

Short balls can be pulled for six, as long as your batsman is in the right position and your timing is good. Use the six button when pulling: there is little point in playing a normal shot, as you will get caught. Practice the pull shot in the nets as the AI opponent bowls heaps of them, enabling easy runs.

The best shots for hitting sixes are the leg glance (full ball on stumps), straight drive (good length), square drive (good length wide of stumps), and pull shot (short ball).

A straight drive down the ground using the normal shot is the safest way to get runs quickly, particularly when the field is in.

A late cut against a spinner will frequently result in a caught behind.

Bowlers can hit the ball for six just as often as the specialist batsmen.

Running between wickets is hard and beginners can often run out most of their batsmen. Make sure the ball beats the fielder before pressing **X**. You can always get an extra run on the throw if a fieldsmen is right on the boundary. Running threes is possible if the ball trickles to near the boundary line.

BOWLING TIPS

Variety and deception is the key when playing against friends. Vary pace as much as possible to get your opponent to mistime their shot. You can fool the competition by bowling a slower ball, and rapidly pressing a button other than boost button when you are coming in to bowl. They will be expecting a fast ball, and get a very slow one instead. Most opponents find the spinners the hardest

to bat against, because they allow the most variety. All opponents are most likely to get caught or run out. Take care with your field placements and bowl to your field.

FIELDING TIPS

Practice makes perfect, as in most games or sports, but, in cricket, fielding is the most difficult part, especially with the frustrating changing camera perspective.

Field settings are absolutely crucial. Most of the close-in fielders are generally redundant. Fielders on the boundary square of the wicket and at mid-on and off will save loads of runs. But don't be afraid to bring your mid-on and off in to try and encourage your opponent to hit over the top, especially when you have mastered the change of pace.

CHEATS

- All the following passwords are entered in the password section on the classic match section. All effect most playing modes and can be used in combination.

DROPBALL

Fieldsman have butter fingers
PENSIONS

Makes a World XI squad available

SOLIDOAK

Unbreakable stumps
SUNSHINE
Play at a beachside ground
BIGBALLS

Play with an enormous ball
SUPERMAN

Batsman have super strength and can hit the ball way out of the stadium

CHRISREA
Allows a dynamic helmet camera that's lots of fun

AFL '99 is a "special" experience. Blueboy Jason Hill provides some tips for those struggling to master the great Australian game.

AFL '99

GENERAL PLAY

The key to victory is developing a solid passing game and holding possession without giving your opponent any sniff of the ball.

Big solo bursts down from the backline through the centre corridor might antagonise your mates, but they'll more often than not simply result in a costly turnover.

Learn to use the radar. It's tough having to look in two different places at once, but the radar is crucial for seeing how much space you have to run into and helping spot open players. The arrows are useful for showing you passing options, but they don't indicate whether a man is free or not. *AFL '99* is not quite as realistic as EA would let you believe – in some key positions, men are often left unchecked.

CENTRE BOUNCE

The centre bounce is crucial in giving you first use of the ball. Learn to carefully time your jump at the centre bounce, and watch the way your rovers run through the pack. You want to look for a handpass out of the centre square and then a kick towards your forwards, preferably out to the wing, where your teammates are usually left unchecked.

MARKING

After taking a mark, make sure you listen for the whistle. Occasionally it can appear that you've taken a mark, but an opponent has touched it first or it hit the ground first, and he can tackle you and get a holding the ball decision. And after taking a grab, unless there is no opposition around and you are close to goal, it's usually best to go back and have a set kick. Don't press the joypad after you take the grab or you will have played on and be vulnerable to a tackle.

Once you have walked back to your mark, press **●** to toggle between targets. You'll almost

always have at least one teammate in the clear, often with two others nearby shepherding/watching/scratching themselves. Then you simply have to make sure you kick accurately using the kicking metre and you should hit your teammate's chest every time. You don't have to control the marker, in fact, beginners are best advised to let the teammate take the grab automatically unless the kick is wayward.

KICKING OUT

Take care when kicking out. A loose ball inside the 50m arc will often be swooped upon by your opponent. A shot kick to a wide open teammate is usually best. It doesn't matter how many short kicks it takes to even get out of the 50m arc as long as they are all safe passes. If you want to belt the ball as hard as you can, make sure it is to wide open pasture and you quickly change to a man you can run onto the ball. But again, it's not always easy to grab a bouncing ball, and you risk turning the ball over close to goal. We recommend you try to keep possession taking smaller passes to ensure your opponent doesn't have a chance.

TACKLING

Learn to use the **R1** shoulder barge as well as the tackle. Be aggressive, especially in defence inside your 50m arc. If you don't quickly force a turnover, chances are your opponent will score, so you might as well risk a free kick from the umpire. It also pays to pressure opponents when they are kicking from close to the boundary, as you can force them to kick out of bounds on the full.

The **▲** speed burst is useful for dodging opponents as you charge goalward, but even fastest players will get run down when in possession of the ball. As soon as you are open and have a good option, pass the ball by hand or preferably foot.



If you are about to pick up a loose ball and there are opposition players very close, it's best to keep tapping **●** to handpass the ball forward or to a teammate as soon as you've picked it up. The umps are ruthless with holding-the-ball decisions, so you don't want to be pinged as soon as you pick up the ball. If you quickly handpass, you'll be able to pounce straight back on the bouncing ball and run free and kick to a teammate.

KICKING TO THE FORWARD LINE

When passing to a forward, make sure he's in the clear. Opposition defenders have an annoying habit of taking enormous species over your step-ladder forwards. Better to short pass, even if it's wide, or try and run the ball to a vacant forward, than kick to a tight contest.

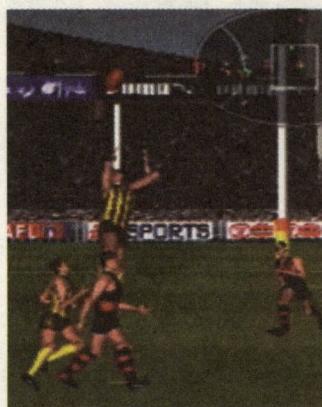
If a man takes an uncontested mark on the half forward flank, chances are he can run to about 40m out and kick a goal on the run without sighting an opponent.

KICKING FOR GOAL

Remember that more skilful players are better when kicking from set shots – their metre moves more slowly to allow better accuracy. Learn the positions of your team's best goalkickers, and don't be afraid to share the ball around, even kicking sideways or backwards to ensure the best kicker takes the shot.

FUN FACT AFL '99

You can create a team of giants or midgets, or change any of the attributes such as speed, strength and kicking in an exhibition match against the computer or your mates. Just go to the statistics screen off the team select page and change the sliding metres.





TIPS

the MIGHTY BRAIN

CHEATS

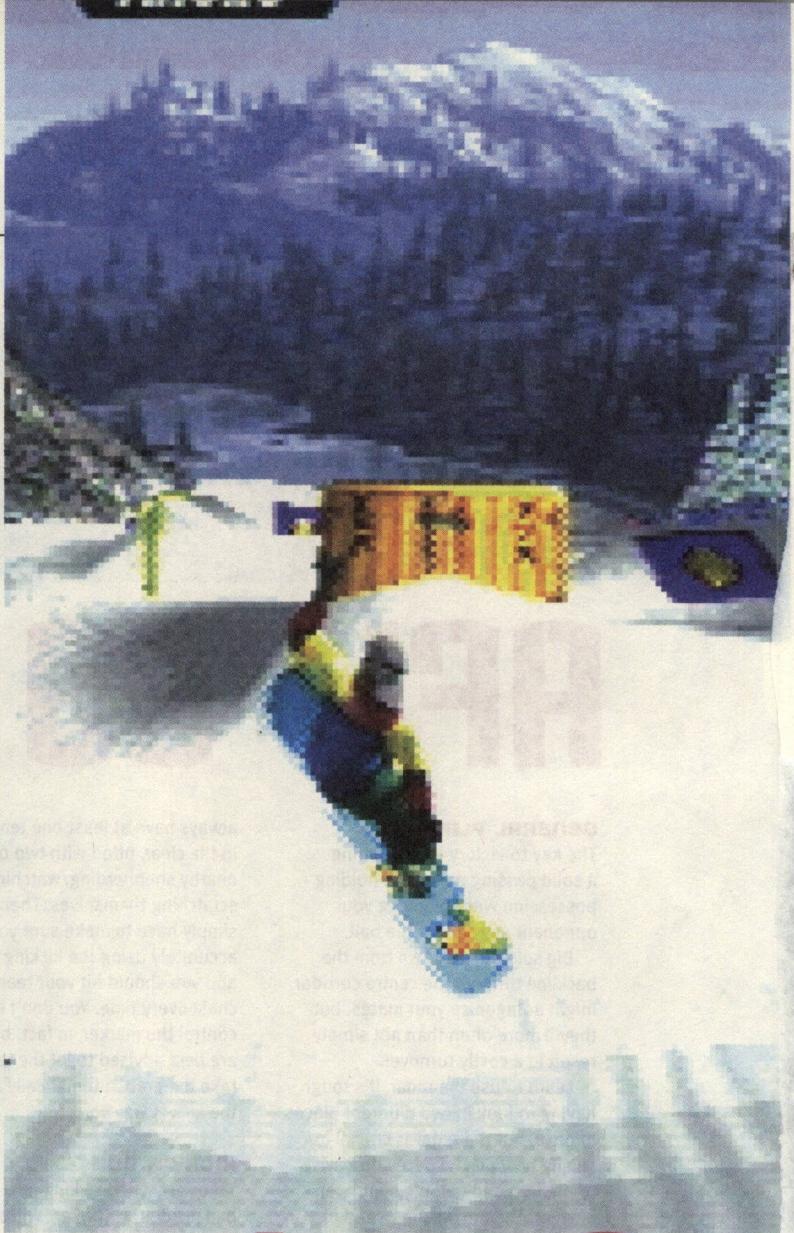
X-Games Pro Boarders

Use these cheats to get you down the slopes ahead of the gang.

To unlock the Circuit mode, on the password screen enter;
*, Circle, *, ▲, ▲, ■

To unlock the Circuit mode and the hidden character Ollie B, on the password screen enter;
▲, *, ■, *, ▲, ●

To unlock the Circuit mode Super Circuits, on the password screen enter;
■, ▲, *, ■, ●, ●



Cool Boarders 3

You've got your designer gear, you've got your fingers flexed and your pal at the ready, but what you really need are some cheats, just to help out...

CHEATS

ALL TRACKS

Select Tournament mode and enter **W O N I T A L L**. A radical dude will call you a cheater.

ALL BOARDERS

Select Tournament mode again and enter **O P E N E M**. You'll hear the voice again if it's right.

CHANGE THE HEADS

Enter **B I G H E A D S**. Press **R2** or **L2** to increase or decrease the size.

DISPLAY COORDINATES

Enter **S H O W P O S** as your name. The character's position flicks up in the bottom left-hand corner of the screen.

IN-GAME DATA

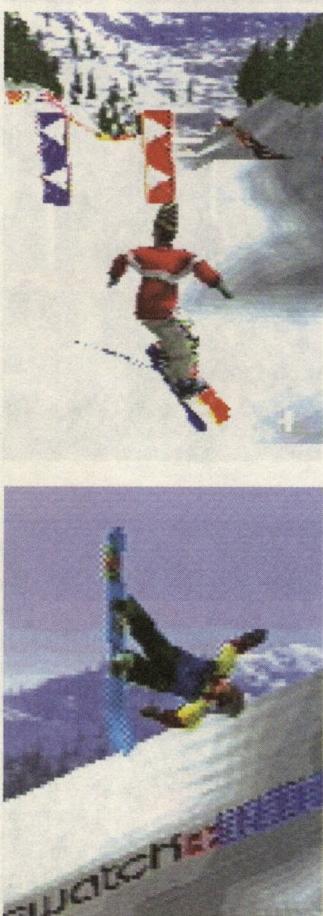
Key in **L1 + L2 + R1 + R2** at the menu with the one-player/multi-player split-screen options. The necessary data pops up in the bottom right-hand corner.

CONTROL REPLAY CAMERA

Hang on to the **←** button during the replay to switch or slow down. Hitting **↓** pauses the game.

ELIMINATE FALLING SNOW

Start your run, then quit. Repeatedly press the ***** button and resume the race to find all the snow gone and a stunning view. Wax 'em down!



Triple Play 2000

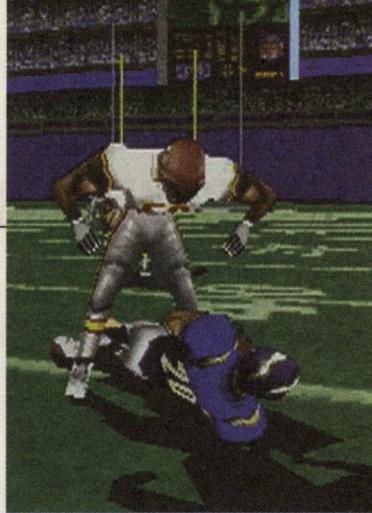
All star game cheat: This allows you to play *Baseball 2000* using the National and American teams in Exhibition mode only. Select to play the Exhibition Mode, then select the Options mode from the bottom left-hand corner of the screen. Highlight the DH rule option and enter the following combination of buttons – ■ ● ■ ● Start. Plug it in correctly and when you return to the team select screen you'll find that you can now play using either the National or American baseball teams.

Auto-hit cheat: This allows you to change the values of the ball before it's actually hit. Select Options while in the game (except for the Home Run Derby), and highlight the Vibration option.

Enter the following: L1 R1 L1 R1 Start.

Get it right and when you return to the Options menu you'll see a new option called Auto-hit. You will now be able to change the settings for the ball status, Y and X-angles, power, Side-Spin, and the X and Y cross.

Shell Option cheat: Allows you to change the colour of the background and transition screen wipes within the game. Select Options while in the game, in any play mode, highlight the Credits option. Then enter the following combination: ■ ● ■ ● Start. Enter the sequence correctly, and you will automatically be taken to a new screen which shows the new options available to you.



NFL Xtreme

and COREY as the last name. Once you've selected which game you wish to play, both your team and the opposing team will have two-dimensional flat heads.

TINY PLAYERS

To play your selected game with tiny players, go to Rosters from the main menu and select Create Free Agent. Now enter TINY as the first name and the following letters as the last name TOM. Once you have selected which game you wish to play, both your team and the opposing team will have (surprise, surprise!) little players.

NFL Blitz

To access bonus characters, input the codes below at the Enter Name screen in Arcade Play mode. Then go to the Enter Pin screen and add the four-digit pin number. If the name and code have been entered correctly, a voice will say, "Lights out, baby."

Character name: Mark Turmel
Code: T U R M E L
Pin number: 0 3 2 2.

Character name: Sal Divita
Code: S A L
Pin number: 0 2 0 1.

Character name: Jason Skiles
Code: J A S O N
Pin number: 3 1 4 1.

Character name: Jennifer Hedrick
Code: J E N I F R,
Pin number: 3 3 3 3.

Character name: Dan Thompson
Code: D A N I E L,
Pin number: 0 6 0 4.
Character name: Jeff Johnson

Code: J A P P L E

Pin number: 6 6 6 0.

Character name: John Root

Code: R O O T

Pin number: 6 0 0 0.

Character name:

Luis Mangubat

Code: L U I S

Pin number: 3 3 3 3.

Character name: Jim Gentile

Code: G E N T I L

Pin number: 1 1 1 1.

Character name: Brain

Code: B R A I N

Pin number: 1 1 1 1.

Character name: Dan Forden

Code: F O R D E N

Pin number: 1 1 1 1.

Character name: Skull

Code: S K U L L

Pin number: 1 1 1 1.

Character name:

Demon Shinok Code:

S H I N O K

Pin number: 8 3 3 7.

Character name: Raiden

Code: R A I D E N

Pin number: 3 6 9 1.

Madden NFL '99

FOR BONUS STADIUM ENTER THESE CODES AT THE CODE SCREEN:

EA Sports: EA_STADIUM

Tiburon: OURHOUSE

Cleveland: DOGPOUND99

Rfk: THE HOGS

FOR BONUS TEAMS ENTER THE FOLLOWING CODES CAREFULLY AT THE CODE SCREEN:

NFC Pro Bowl: BESTNFC

AFC Pro Bowl: AFCBEST

All-Madden: BOOM

All-time stat leaders: IMTHEMAN

1960s Greats: PEACELOVE

1970s Greats: BELLBOTTOMS

1980s Greats: SPRBWLSHUFL

1990s Greats: HEREANDNOW

All-time Greats: TURKEYLEG

75th Anniversary Team: THROWBACK

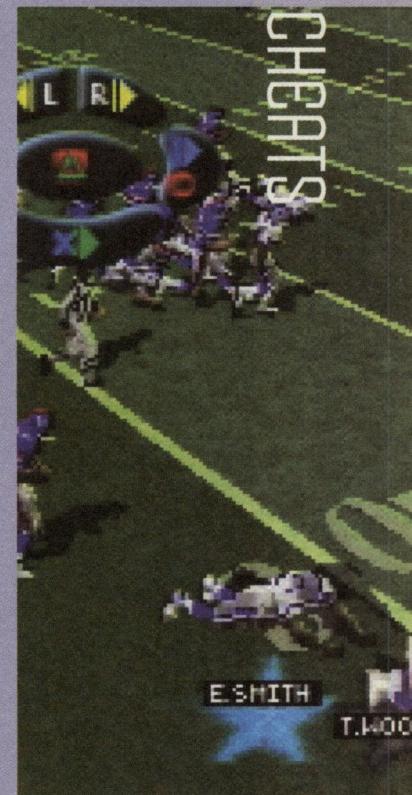
NFL Equipment Team: GEARGUYS

1999 Cleveland Browns:

WELCOMEBACK

EA Sports: INTHEGAME

Tiburon: HAMMERHEAD

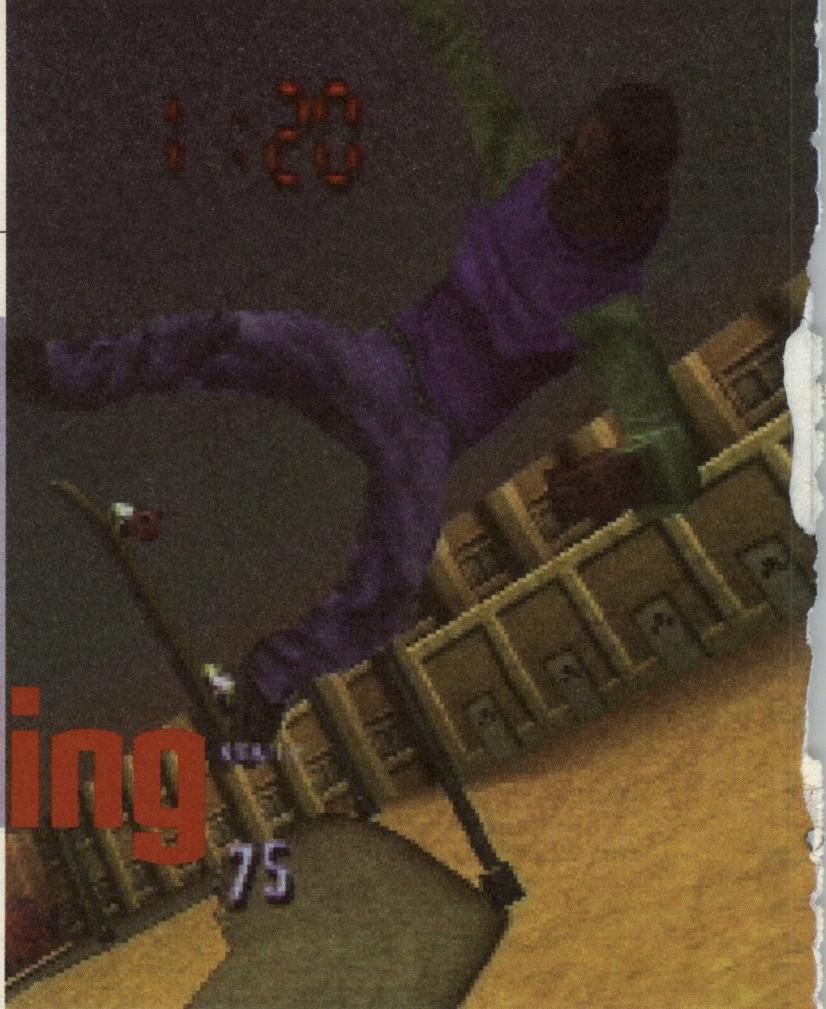
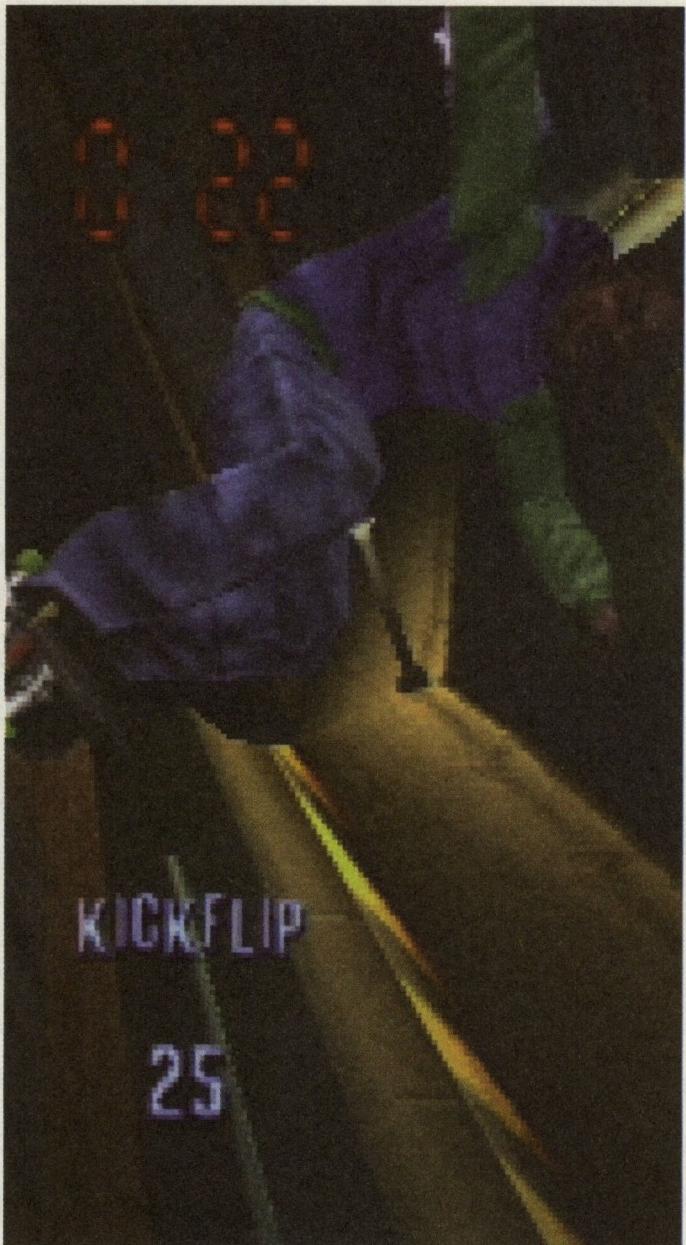


TIPS

the MIGHTY BRAIN

Test out your cool moves when you find all the hidden videotapes and grab all the S-K-A-T-E letters with our indispensable *Tony Hawk* guide.

TONY HAWK'S Skateboarding



WAREHOUSE: WOODLAND HILLS

Get S-K-A-T-E

[S] Leap across the gap between the two ramps on the left-hand side of the warehouse. Dead easy.
[K] After S, ride round to the right hand side and pull a 180 off the wall. You'll clip the letter and land in a perfect line for...

[A] This is hovering above the dead taxi cab.

[T] Keep up the speed and try to clear the half pipe head on. A big ollie should do it and perhaps a cheeky 360 to pile on some points.
[E] Finally, leap up the lip on the far left of the floor, next to the first ramp you came down. Brake sharply and you should catch it.

HIDDEN VIDEOTAPE

Totally easy, but looks impressive. Fly down the right-hand side ramp from the start point and pull a huge ollie off the pipe to smash through the glass, clear the secret room and grab the tape as you pass.

SCHOOLHOUSE: MIAMI

Get S-K-A-T-E

[S] Hang a left as you clear the first leap and shoot down the stairs holding the left-hand side. Hop on to the rail and grind down, picking up the letter on the way down.
[K] Clear the stairs and use the two mini ramps to jump through the letter.

[A] Check out the poster board on the left as you clear that jump, and hop up on to the second rail.

[T] Easy. You can see it from miles away. Follow the half pipe through and ride the wall at the end.
[E] Dart between the two pools and

grind the rail in the middle to collect the final letter.

HIDDEN VIDEOTAPE

Take off to the right of the roof, up the ramp to the top. Duck between the rails, leap from the left-hand ramp to the flat roof. Grind down the plank or ollie on to the canopy. Ollie off the end, grabbing the tape.

MALL: NEW YORK

Get S-K-A-T-E

[S] After the second incline, ollie up on to the rail on the left and clip the letter on the way past.

[K] Sweep out to the right as you crash through the glass entrance way. The letter is hidden in a bush. Grind off the edge of the plant tubs to pick it up.

[A] Sweep down into the area before the escalators full of water, and grind the white bars that cross over the water, catching the letter on the way.
[T] After the escalators, ollie up on to the central block and grind the arch after the mall sign.

[E] A simple ollie from the first ramp as you emerge into the open air should do the trick.

HIDDEN VIDEOTAPE

These hidden videotape things are starting to get a little bit tricky now. Crash on through the mall gateway and bear right towards the letter K. Keep out of the water and instead sweep past the ramp and the red car on the right. You will find the next bit of this is the hard part. Make a huge leap off the end ramp and you should see yourself landing on the white roof beams that span the pool below. Grind all the way to the end and ollie off for the tape. Mess it up though and you will have to



head back up between the waterfalls and try it again.

DOWNTOWN: MINNEAPOLIS

Get S-K-A-T-E

[S] First up, leap from the ramp, right on to the ledge, ollie off the end and grind along the rail. You'll need to ollie off the end to safely catch the letter though.

[K] Head up the road to the right-hand side after you've clipped the first letter, and look out for the big glass-fronted building. Smash through the window and shoot up the ramp to the letter at the top. Ollie back through the window for a bundle of points.

[A] Flip round from the start point and ollie up on to the back ledge. Check out the powerline above you to see the letter, bear left and make a turn at the next ramp. Nestled

under the line is a large ramp you can use to ollie up and grind along. **[T]** Run up the back end of the car transporter that's parked up against the wall, ollie off the end and fly through the window. Follow the path up to the roof and the T is sitting in your way.

[E] Probably the easiest letter in the level. Shoot down the path into the bowl with the fountain and make a jump right over the top.

HIDDEN VIDEOTAPE

Again, the stunt difficulty level gets harder in this section. Spin round from the start and leap up on to the next level. Bear left until you spot the truck, ride up its back and ollie across to the burst through the window. Follow the path up on to the roof and bypass the glass shed, heading towards the gap in front.

You will find yourself in a small rooftop bowl; use the lips to pick up speed and burst through the exit to the left. The videotape's dangling in mid-air, you'll catch it on the way past and should land in a second bowl to pick up a few more points. Miss the roof and you will be stuffed because it will take the rest of the time to get back to that position.

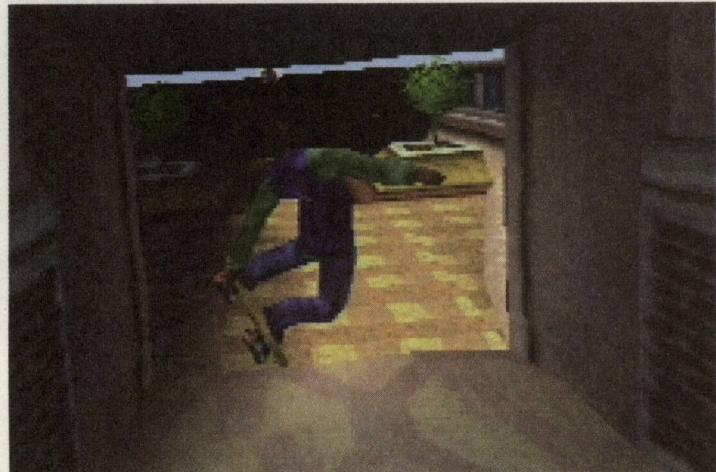
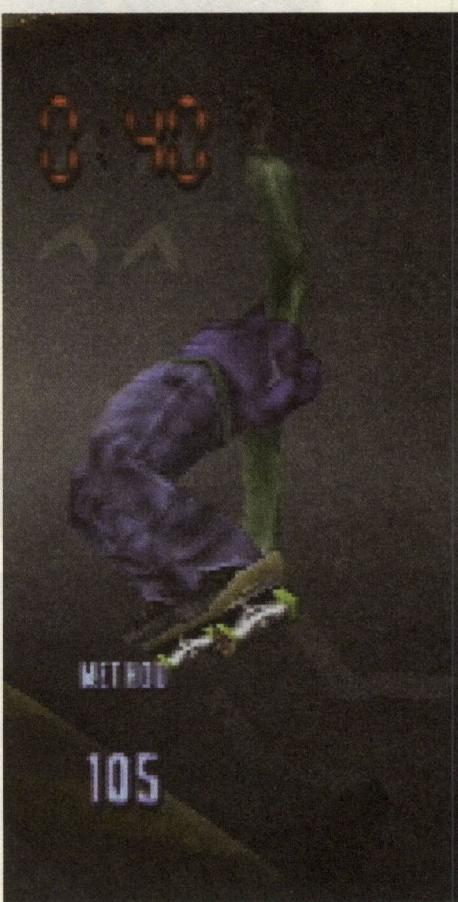
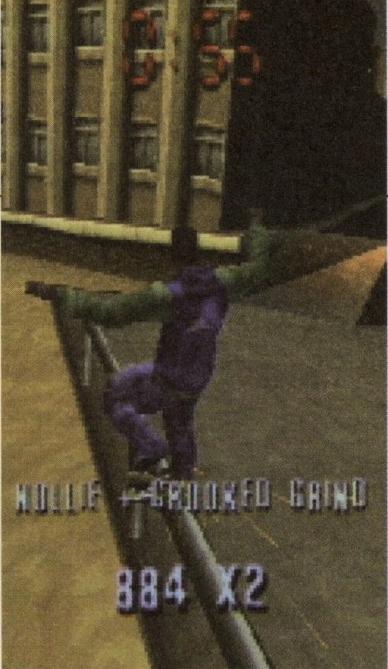
DOWNHILL JAM: PHOENIX

Get S-K-A-T-E

[S] The first letter's fairly straightforward. Bypass the pipes on the right and dodge the kerbs aiming for the first ramp ahead. You'll see the letter floating above the lip, ollie off the top, catch the letter and shred the wall at the other side.

[K] Underneath the archway you'll see another small ramp leading up to a pair of pipes with the K sat on top.

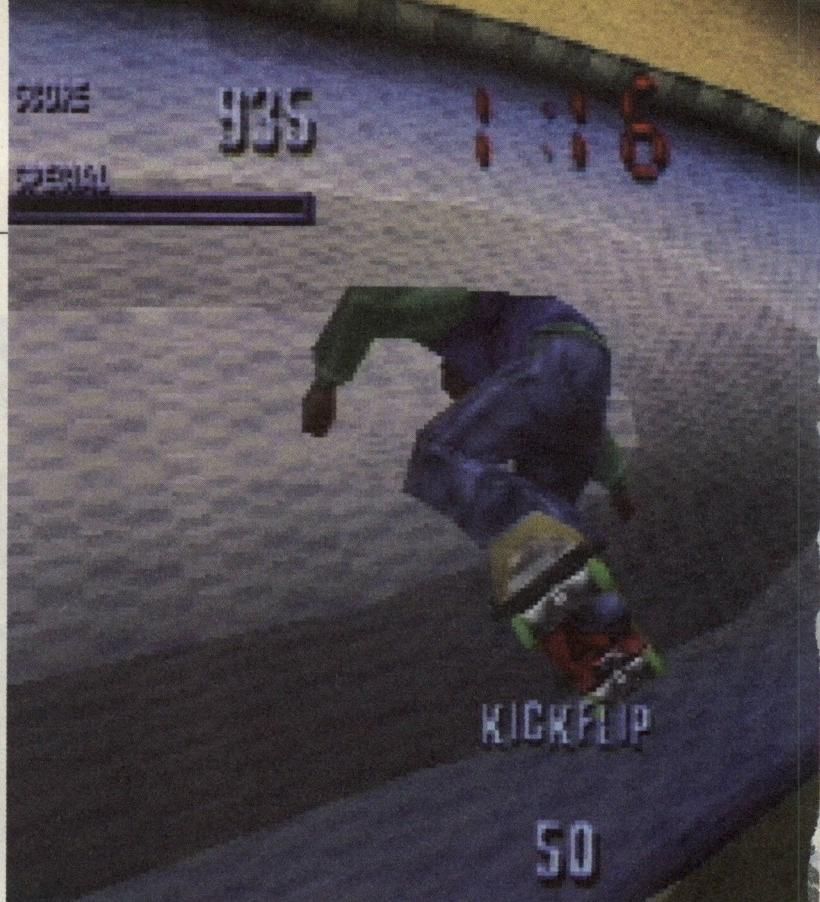
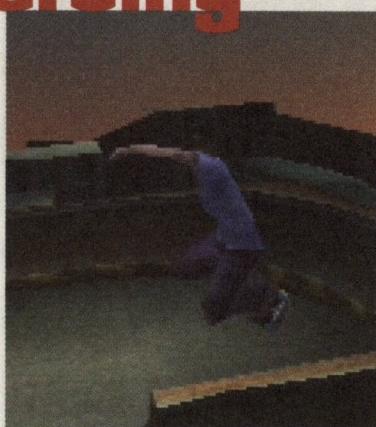
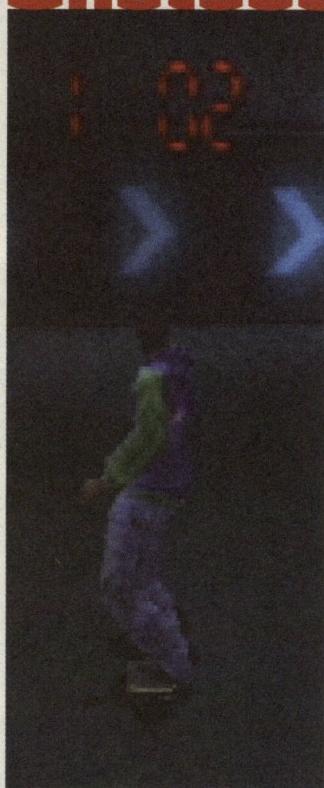
CONTINUED OVERLEAF



TIPS

the MIGHTY BRAIN

TONY HAWK'S Skateboarding



A cheeky grind across should mean you'll grab it.

[A] There are two ways for you to grab hold of this letter. One is to lip off to the right of the half-pipe. Alternatively, spin round and follow the small ramp that leads off to the left of the rock archway. At the top you'll find a pipe, grind across on to the upper tier and pull a trick off the wall to pick up the letter.

[T] On the lower level, run through the tunnel leading from the tower pillar and you'll see it ahead.

[E] Tricky one this. Bear right of the track before it drops down and pull a trick to get on to the higher level. Generate speed between the edges of the pipe, when you're really ripping, push up on the right-hand pipe and you'll land on another pipe. Grind to the end and you'll be the proud owner of the final letter.

HIDDEN VIDEO TAPE

Popular consensus has it that this is the hardest tape to get in the entire game, requiring pinpoint accurate grinding. As you pass on the left-hand

side of the rock archway, ride up the ramp and grind across top the flat level where you found the letter A. At the end you'll find another wire across to the left, grind along to the other side and pull a wall ride to clear the big gap with no ramp. Pull a jump off up to the top of the big rock pillar, clear the sign and wall ride the second gap to the huge jump at the end. Bear slightly right and, with enough speed, you'll reach the tape nestling up on the huge central pillar. Miss it and you'll have to retry the

TONY HAWK'S SKATEBOARDING

COMPETITIONS

Most of the levels in *Tony Hawk's* are relatively easy, in as much as it will only take a few runs and you will have picked up enough tapes to see you through to the next level – although perhaps the Downhill Jam: Phoenix course might be an exception to that rule.

When it comes to the comps though, you're entering a world of trouble. Success in competitions is solely about racking up the points, none of these fancy free reward tapes for picking up items. To get points you have to pull a huge range of elaborate, difficult and daring tricks, which means you are going to have to be an accomplished skater to get through the level.

Stage One, in Chicago is relatively easy, although on your first few goes you might not think so. Get on the good foot by grinding the opening rail, then duck into the half pipe on the left to start racking up the points. That should be all it takes to get you through the level, think grabs and grinds. If it's not, use the bowl and the remaining rails to keep up the score.

The second stage at Burnside, Portland is a complete nightmare. The first time you try it you'll probably pull out the huge tricks from your slowly-building repertoire, then wonder why the judges haven't scored you above 40 points. It's because, compared to the other competitors, you're rubbish and need practice at pulling different kinds of tricks. Use the transfers as much as possible and you'll get a host of bonuses. Transfer to grind in the bowl at the far end is worth a few points. After a strong opening keep up the pace and aim for a score somewhere around 18-20,000 in each heat.



The final stage at Roswell, New Mexico is a complete nightmare. Building up a respectable tally of points on the half pipes is a good idea, but always remember to supplement them with grinds whenever possible. By this stage you should have a fairly good grasp of multiple trick combos. Use them to your advantage and you should win the level. Stick to old tawdry tricks, or wipeout too often and you'll surely lose...

E**RUNE GLIFBERG****Select**

OLLIE
SPEED
AIR
BALANCE
AGE 25
BORN DENMARK
HOMETOWN COSTA MESA
YEARS PRO 7
STANCE REGULAR
HEIGHT

D C = Select

X = Account

A = Back



entire course, because there isn't enough time to retrace your path.

STREETS: SAN FRANCISCO**Get S-K-A-T-E**

[S] Bear left at the bottom of the run and follow the path to the ramps leading into the big building.

[K] Keep right at the start of the run and take the ramp up through the glass window. Slow down and don't grind the rail, just drop down the three or four ledges until you fall on top of the letter.

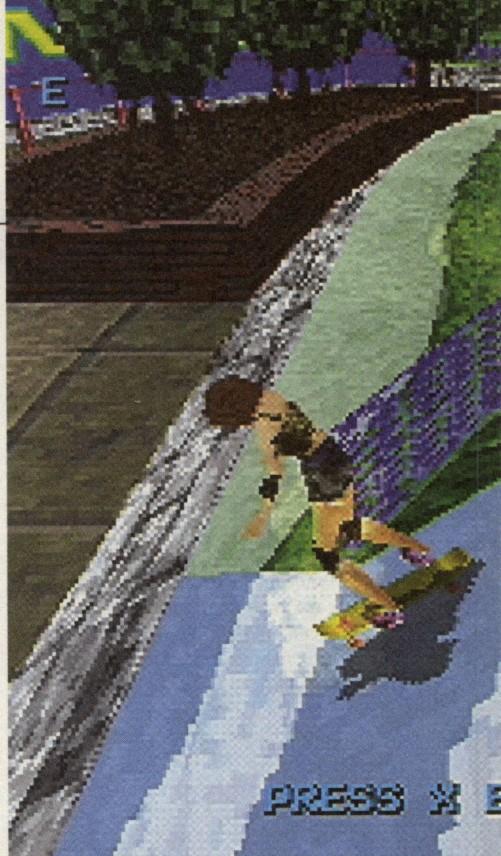
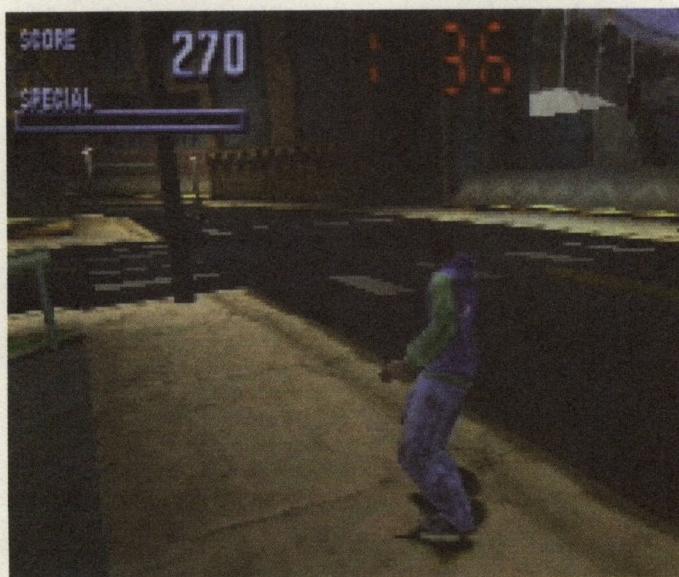
[A] Head into China Town, past the cop cars and climb the hill to the quarter pipes to find the letter.

[T] Leap off a small ramp on the right-hand side as you head down from China Town, and stay on the lip at the top. You'll run through into a room where the letter sits. Exit through the appropriate door and ollie back to the floor.

[E] On the far side of the bandstand you'll find a ramp leading up to a huge glass window. Run up it at speed and ollie at the last moment to go flying through the glass window. You'll see the letter from here, floating at the top of an elaborately decorated bowl. Dive in and start pulling some tricks. Build up air off of the lips until you're high enough to reach over and grab the letter.

HIDDEN VIDEOTAPE

Head down the hill on to the street and take the first right. All the way down you'll find a quarter pipe next to the last building on the left, just before the road ends. Run up it and catch the platform above, then follow the path as it wraps round the building. On the roof, use the first ramp to kickflip back on yourself and hurtle off the second ramp. You should fall through a glass roof, grabbing the tape as you fall.

**Street Sk8ter****HIDDEN CHARACTERS**

Beating the game twice with the same character unlocks an additional one.

Character	Unlocks
Ginge ...	Bonobo the Monkey
Frankie	Shao the Roller-blade Ninja
Jerry	Mick
TJ	Sarah

UNLOCK THE GATES

Beat the Street Tour with each character to open the blue gates you couldn't enter previously. Each character you do this with will unlock two more gates.

**CHEATS**

This Is Soccer

Enter the cheats on the main menu, select exhibition match, choose the teams and strategy and then start your game.

Small players: ■, R2, →, L2, U
Big heads: ▲, ▲, L2, U, U

Small heads: R2, ↓, L2, U, ●

Tracksuits: ●, L2, ←, R2, ▲

Black and white picture:
↑, RI, L2, RI, R2

Soccer ball becomes a human head: ←, U, U, U, R2

Baby dolls: →, ■, ↑, ↑, R2

Topless: ↓, R2, R2, R2, ▲

1970s bikers: U, R2, L2, ●, RI

Actual Soccer 3

Use these as custom team names

- BREMNER'S BOOT: Leeds United All Stars team
- DIAMOND LIGHTS: Best of Spurs team
- DOWN DOWN DOWN: Blackburn 94-95 team
- DOWN THE TOON: Newcastle Stars team
- DUNCNOMORE: Everton Stars team
- FOREIGN LEGION: Chelsea Stars team
- YES PLEASE: Top 50 Babes 1 team
- NO THANKS: Top 50 Babes 2 team
- PREM CLUBS: Bonus teams
- RAM RAIDERS: Derby Stars team
- SCOUSE PERMS: Liverpool 77-98 team
- SEXY FOOTBALL: Shearer's XXX team
- SIR MATT: Busby Babes team
- TEA TOTAL: Arsenal 70-90 team
- BALD FRITZ: Classic Ipswich team

Libero Grande

Hidden players

Arnold Lang, (Alexi Lalas) you must have a score of over 8000.

Ruprecht Goes, (Ruud Gullit) qualify in all events in the game.

David Magellan, (Diego Maradona) score a total of 1500 in all events.

Gregorio Zonaras, (Gianfranco Zola) complete arcade mode in default settings.

Maurice Poulen, (Michel Platini) total score of 100 in VS CPU mode.

When you first complete and win the International Cup, you will gain a hidden character. Different teams will present the following characters:

Roland (Ronaldo).

Minoru Kai (Kazuyoshi Miura).

Edgard Caillaux (Eric Cantona).

Powell Gardner (Paul Gascoigne).

Gerald Wells (George Weah).



The mighty game seems all the more so when you breeze through it with ease.

FIFA '99

FORMATIONS

As you'd expect there are oodles of options to choose from in *FIFA '99*, but often these can cause more problems than they're worth. Feel free to practise but we reckon you're better off sticking with the usual 4-4-2, 5-3-2 and so on. Four along the back can be good, but decent through-balls will rip your defence to shreds. To combat this you can use the Sweeper option which places the strongest defender in front of the goalie. But don't even think about trying an offside trap. For the midfield, a diamond formation is good for giving you tons of passing options, but it doesn't work so well for wing play. A flat midfield will give you a lot of options for changing the style of play. The forward line doesn't really require much thought. Just stick the two best players up front!

FOR THE BEGINNER

For those not used to the *FIFA* system, the first thing you need to get used to is shifting the control of your player. A quick tap of * will switch your control to the nearest player to the ball.

Pay attention to the ball indicator as this shows the directions you can pass in. It's a good way to trick your opponent so practise a lot.

A constant stream of passes is the best way of getting the ball up the field and avoiding opponents.

Unlike previous *FIFA* games, the latest one gives you the option to



shield a falling ball from the other teams by controlling it with your chest. This will take some getting used to but can be effective if you're playing a long ball game.

You need to be more tactical than just trying to sprint past players. The best way is to approach him at a normal pace then turn the direction slightly and repeatedly press Sprint just in front of them. Even the best tackle shouldn't stop your charge upfield.

INTERMEDIATE SKILLS

Cross-field lobs are easily mastered and can prove effective. They also give you more chance to use special moves to smack the ball into the back of the net.

When you're lining up a set piece you can change view with RI. In this viewpoint you can set up a lot more spectacular plays using diving headers, bicycle kicks and so on.

Try not to aim your crosses too close to the goal as the keepers are very impressive. Try and get the ball to into the penalty spot and you should have more luck with crosses.

To try to head the ball into goal press ● while the ball is in the air. If the player can reach it in the 18 yard box he'll try a diving header.

To head the ball to a near by team-mate hold * while the ball is in the air. This is an underrated feature and can pay dividends in terms of keeping possession. You can head the ball back across the net to team-mates this way.



To head up in the air to a team-mate's head or chest just press ■.

Double-tap ● to pull off some spectacular volleys. They're more likely to score but require time and space. Opponents trying to head or chest the ball away will beat you to the ball. Face your player away from the net and he'll try a bicycle kick.

You can also pass and lob the ball on the volley by double-tapping * or ■ respectively.

PROFESSIONAL TACTICS

Use the wing-back run to start a quick break on one flank. While a defender has the ball, hold L2 + R2 and press ▲. Now look for the player with indicator running up the wing. Move the ball away from that side. Tactic players are easier to target than other players so you should be able to hit that player with a through pass (RI) or a lob.

Holding L2 + R2 and pressing ■ will activate an offside trap. If your opponent has pushed all their players forward and is using an



attacking strategy this will start to become useful. Beware though as the CPU opponents are fairly intelligent and will try to recover to keep the play going.

You can use passback mode to get one-twos going. While holding L2 + R2, press RI to pass and reposition for a return pass. While holding L2 + R2, press LI to gain control of another player and ask for a pass (offball). This takes some getting used to but can be effective.

THE SKILL MOVES

The flick move is perfect for beating a defender. Hold R2 and press ■ and the ball will sail over his head on to your awaiting foot.

A 360 degree spin is the best way to shield off challenges and keep your momentum. Hold L2 or R2 and press ● or just double tap L2 or R2. A well-timed 360 degree turn by the 18-yard line will give you a great chance of scoring. Be careful though, this move leaves you very open to sliding tackles from the side.

If you're playing against a player who likes to dive in with the tackles lateral dodging should sort them out as it shifts your player to the left or right completely avoiding the tackle. There are two ways to do it – tap L2 or R2 once or hold L2 or R2 and press ✕.

Press LI and you can jump over an impending sliding tackle – you can also hop over the goalie.

There are many stepovers and fakes in the game. Holding L2 or R2 and using the D-Pad and sprint button will make players dribble the ball more cautiously and pull fakes when direction is changed. The fakes will cause any tackles nearby to go in the 'faked direction.'

Holding L2 + RI will activate a stepover nutmeg, while R2 + RI will activate a double stepover. Quite tricky to pull off but they can split a defence.

If you get frustrated with the opposition's defence tactics you can always take a dive and try to draw the foul. (Hold L2 or R2 and press LI).

TEN TEAMS FOR ALL LEVELS

To help you to choose which teams are best suited to your skill we've split 30 teams them into groups, each one full of teams better than the last group. Someone who has played the game a lot should pick and choose from the Masters' range, while someone who's is having their first go should pick from the Beginners selection.

BEGINNERS RANGE

- Arsenal ● AC Milan ● Barcelona
- Bayern Munich ● Chelsea ●
- Glasgow Rangers ● Juventus ●
- Liverpool ● Manchester United ●
- Paris St Germain

EXPERIENCED RANGE

- Bordeaux ● Celtic ● Everton ●
- Leeds ● Feyenoord ● Hamburg ●
- Hansa Rostock ● Sheffield
- Wednesday ● West Ham ●
- Wimbledon

MASTERS RANGE

- Academica ● Bari ● Charlton ●
- Empoli ● Gothenburg ● Leicester
- Middlesbrough ● Nottingham Forest ● Southampton

If you still aren't having much luck take a look at these cheats.

DIVING

By pressing L2 and U (or R2) the player will fall as if shot by a sniper. Make sure you're near an opponent when it happens.

PLAYING FOR A FREE KICK

When you get the ball on the wing take it to the 18-yard line then run back and forth along the line until one of the defenders sticks his leg out. Once they knock you down it's just a case of lining up the arrows and picking up the plaudits of your gamers.

CHANGE THE PADS TO PRETEND YOU'RE THE COMPUTER

Set the teams up, but set the controller so you're against yourself. Now play the game for 20 minutes scoring as many own goals as you can. When you're happy, switch controllers back so you're controlling your proper team. Now score some proper goals. Oh, and if you want to get really dirty you can get the strikers of the opposing side sent off by attacking the goalie when you're controlling the other team.

INTERRUPTING THE GAME

When things are going too well there is a shocking system you can use to interrupt an opponent's flow. All you have to do is press Start to bring up the menu screen a few times. To get away with this all you have to do is say that you're trying to find the perfect set-up to combat their skills. Don't try this trick more than four times in any one game as excessive use can often result in a seriously swollen cranium.

SCORE EASY GOALS

Some people have the most extraordinary difficulty getting a ball past the goalkeeper in *FIFA*. Here's the best way to shoot and indeed score.

First up, check out the 25 yard shot. Run at the goal from an angle of about 45 degrees and toe punt it from about five yards outside of the area. Even if it doesn't go in you'll probably get a rebound and be able to sweep it in. An extra tip is to duck left or right just before you make your shot. That'll put the keeper off his line, making it easier for you to punt it in.

Dummaging is very effective for scoring goals as the artificial intelligence is easily fooled. Try veering off in new directions before taking a shot. Even speeding up just before you strike seems to be effective. Keep to all that, and you'll be 18-nil up in no time.

FIFA '99

SCORE EVERY TIME

Most soccer games have sweet spots. These are places where a player can score 95 per cent of the time no matter how good or bad the player is. These are the most effective systems we've uncovered.

METHOD ONE – WINGED WONDERS

One of the easiest ways to score in *FIFA '99* is to bring the ball down the side of the pitch (make sure you choose a team with good wingers, like Liverpool) running past the defenders until you get to the by-line and cross the ball in to a player in the box. Straight after you cross the ball press and hold ● and the ball will sail into the net.

METHOD TWO – A CROSS TO BEAR

Unlike *ISS Pro '98*, scoring from corners is simple. Instead of hitting the ball into the crowded masses, pass the ball into the near post

(use R2 twice to position the ball right on the feet of the striker) and press ● to make the striker perform a minor miracle, turn a full 180 degrees and earn their win bonus.

METHOD THREE – NARROW THE ANGLE

This system has been working ever since the first *FIFA* game crawled on to the Mega Drive. Approach the goal area from the channels (the part of the pitch which isn't the middle or the wing) and, just before you cross into the penalty area, turn and run straight towards the goal. When you get two or three feet into the area, smack the shoot button and pull down and you will have notched up another goal. Even if you don't score there's a very good chance you will get a penalty because this is an area the computer likes to defend.



TIPS

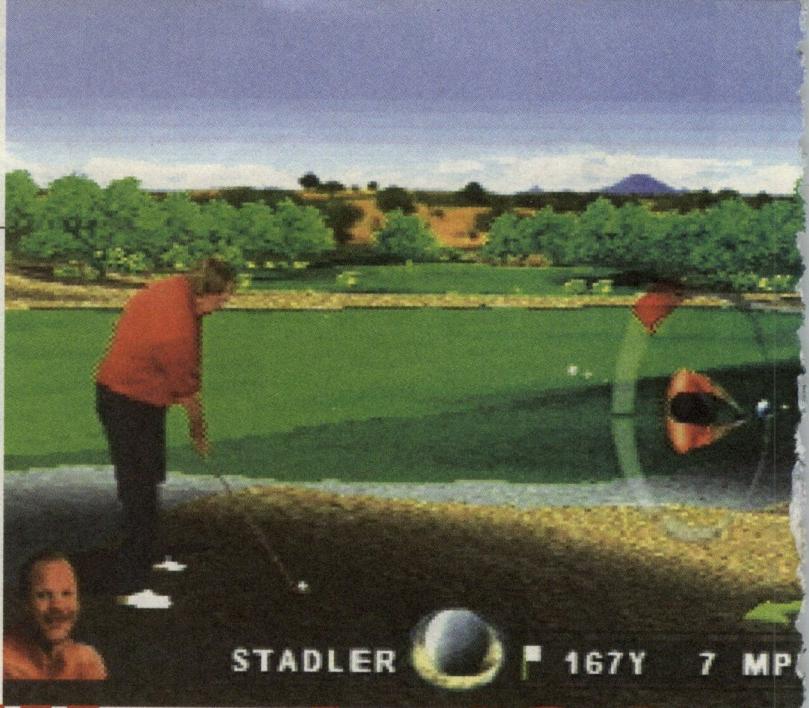
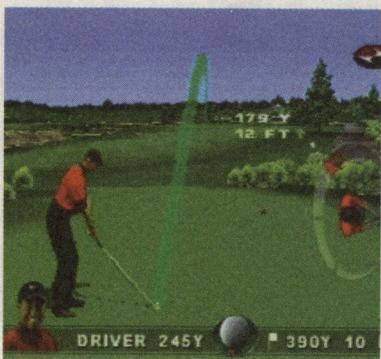
the MIGHTY BRAIN

CHEATS

Pro 18 World Tour Golf



To gain the ability to add more distance to your shots in all *Pro 18 World Tour Golf* game modes, select the information icon on the main menu, then choose Create Golfer. Now select the Edit Name option and enter the name L, O, N, G, S H, O, T, W, O, N, D, E, R. Then, after selecting the Golfer Image, go to any game mode and choose your newly named player to activate the cheat.



STADLER F 167Y 7 MP

Tiger Woods '99

How to put Tiger off his strokes is one of those tricks you stumble across more by luck than judgement. Talented Tiger's lined up, quietly concentrating on his swing, he pulls the club head back ready to drive and someone in the crowd laughs. Guaranteed to put him off his stroke, here's how to generate all sorts of concentration-breaking noises. When your opponent lines up a shot, hit the following buttons.

L1 to make the crowd cheer

L2 to hear a laugh
R1 to hear "That was lucky"
R2 to hear a cough
▲ to hear someone yell "Fore!"
■ to hear "Nice shot!"
● to hear "No way!"
✖ to hear someone mumble "No pressure".
If these don't create enough of a distraction, try changing the tone of the voices. Hold ↑ or ↓, press ✖, ■, ▲, L1 and hold R1 for a helium squeak or R2 for a baritone.



9 IRON 140Y 39Y 7 MPH

Everybody's Golf



For all characters and courses:

Remove PlayStation memory cards. Press and hold L1, L2, R1 + R2 on the second controller.

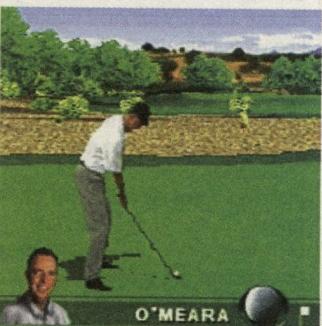
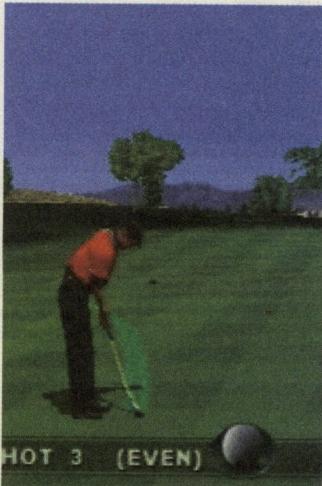
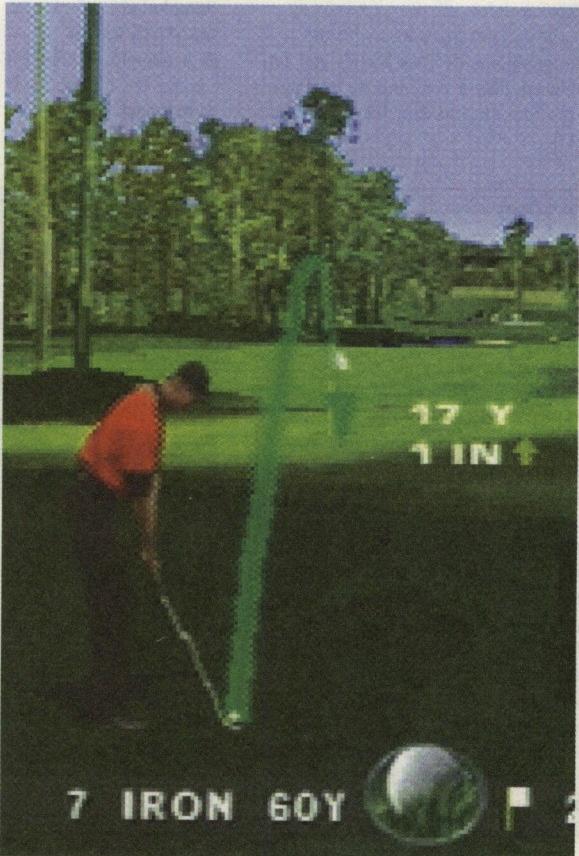
Then with the shoulder buttons still held press ↑, ↑, ↓, ↑, ←, →, →, ←, ↑, ↑, ↓, ↑, ←, →, →, ← on the title screen while the logo is still in motion.

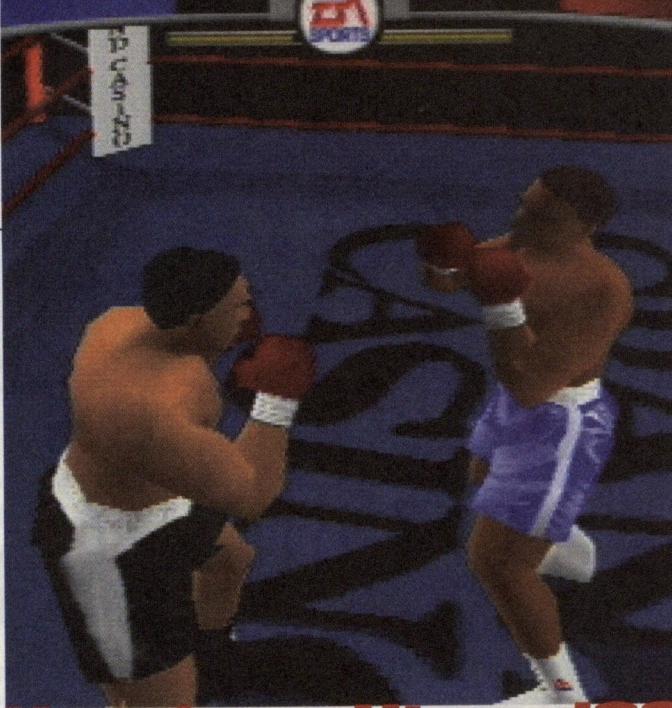
For left or right-handed golfers:

Highlight a golfer at the character selection screen then hold down L1 and press ✖.

To reverse courses:

Highlight a course on the course selection screen then hold down L1+L2+ then press ✖.





Knockout Kings '99

Fat-headed fighters

To give the fighters big, fat heads go to the main menu and enter the following: $\leftarrow, \bullet, \leftarrow, \Delta, \leftarrow, \blacksquare, \leftarrow, \times$. A tone will sound if you have entered the code correctly.

Be a bear

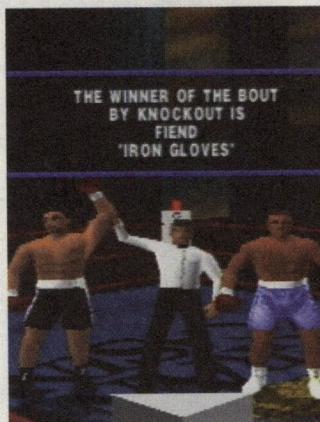
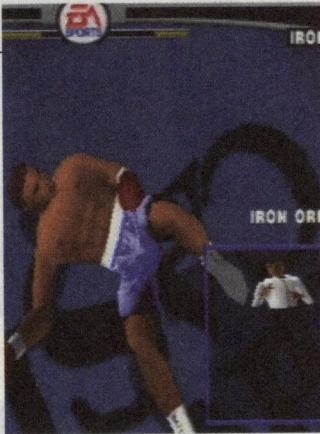
Go to the main menu and enter the following code:
 $\rightarrow, \blacksquare, \rightarrow, \Delta, \rightarrow, \bullet, \rightarrow, \times$. Now

select a fighter and (no surprises here) he will appear in the game as a bear.

Rejuvenate energy

Between fights, you are given the choice of punching the heavy bag or speed bag. At this point press and hold: $\text{L1} + \text{L2} + \text{R1} + \text{R2}$.

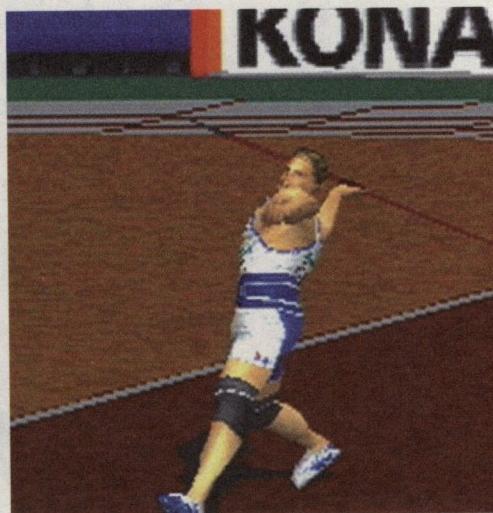
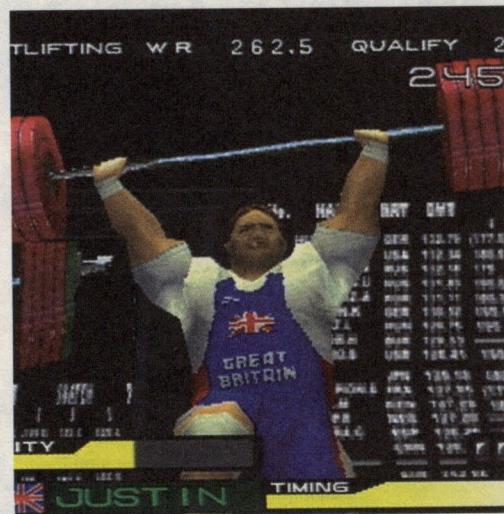
The longer you hold them, the more energy you'll get back.



ISS Pro '98

Show off in front of your mates with this quick cheat to play with the super-cool Class All Stars team:

Press $\uparrow, \downarrow, \leftarrow, \rightarrow, \leftarrow, \rightarrow, \bullet$ and \times . Once you have entered the cheat correctly, you will hear the sound of an impressed applauding crowd. Now, in the Player Selection Screen choose your desired mode, the next screen you come to will be the Team Selection Screen. By holding down L1 and R1 on the controller the team Class All Stars will appear. Press \times to select this all star team of top players.



International Track and Field 2

Bikinis in freestyle swimming:

Highlight 100m freestyle and press $\uparrow, \downarrow, \leftarrow, \rightarrow, \leftarrow, \rightarrow, \bullet, \times$

Hidden gauges:

Choose Start from the title screen and enter any event. Pause the game. Hold the four shoulder buttons and $\blacksquare + \times + \Delta + \bullet$. Keep these buttons held and repeatedly hit \uparrow or \downarrow to move the gauges.

Space shuttle:

Clear 4.5m in the Pole Vault on the first attempt and raise the bar to 5.0m. Clear that and you'll see the space shuttle fly by.

T-Rex:

Get a distance made up of the same digits in the shotput, 22.22 or 33.33, and a T-Rex will appear in the audience.

Birds:

In the discus get a distance where the metres and centimetres match, like 34.34 or 56.56, and a flock of birds will fly overhead.

Mole:

Match up the last three digits of your triple jump, like 12.22 or 20.00, and a mole will appear at the jump off point.



Knockout Kings 2000

If you want to whip your fighter into shape so you can whup the butts of better boxers without all the skipping and hard work, we have the answer. When a fight is starting to get away from you and your energy's disappearing at an alarming rate, go into a clinch with your opponent.

Hopefully it will enable you to get in a few hefty hits plus give you a moment to catch your breath and regain some energy. It also presents the ideal opportunity to punch below the belt. You're able to get away with two illegal moves per bout and nothing saps the strength like a headbutt or a kidney punch. Just try taking our advice and remember to take out your gum shield before those post-flight interviews.

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A-Z OF SPORT

The World of PlayStation Sports is huge. Over the next 29 pages we aim to cover every square inch of that exciting planet, highlighting some of the places you have to visit. First stop 'A' for America...

NFL Blitz 2000

Style: Arcade American football

★★★★★

A long time ago the PlayStation gaming community got wind of a new American football game called *NFL Blitz*. We waited with baited breath and anxiously checked magazine review pages and games' store shelves. But to no avail - the game never materialised.

Now, more than a year later, we're finally going to get a taste of that *Blitz*, albeit a different incarnation. Yes, *NFL Blitz 2000* is on its way. It still sports those expensive *NFL* trappings (real teams, players and stadia), as expected, but after that, the gloves are off. "First down and 10" is now "first down and 30", teams are reduced to just seven and the rulebook has been torn in two to be replaced by utter madness. A cartoon perversion of America's beloved gridiron, *NFL Blitz 2000*'s unique selling point is violence - and heaps of it. Tackles cripple, players can be poleaxed irrespective of whether they have the ball and even after a player is sacked, follow-up roughing is mandatory.

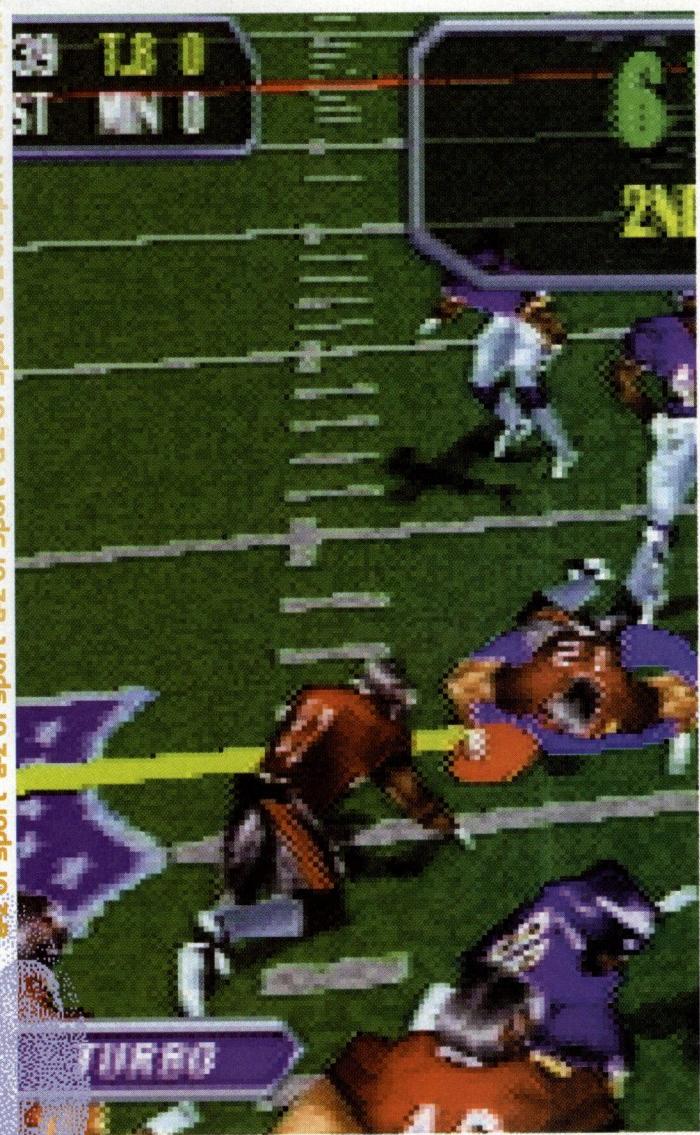
That said, there are still tactics to be utilised - indeed the amount of offensive plays have been upped from the original's 18 to 27 (each can also be reversed). Thoughtful deployment of the nine defence plays will hamper offensive moves, as tactical masterminds can alternate between helmet-denting blitzes and more thoughtful zone plays, picking off potential receivers with pinpoint precision (or a forearm smash). It's this shirking of traditional rules that will gaul American footy purists but it also guarantees more genuine thrills.



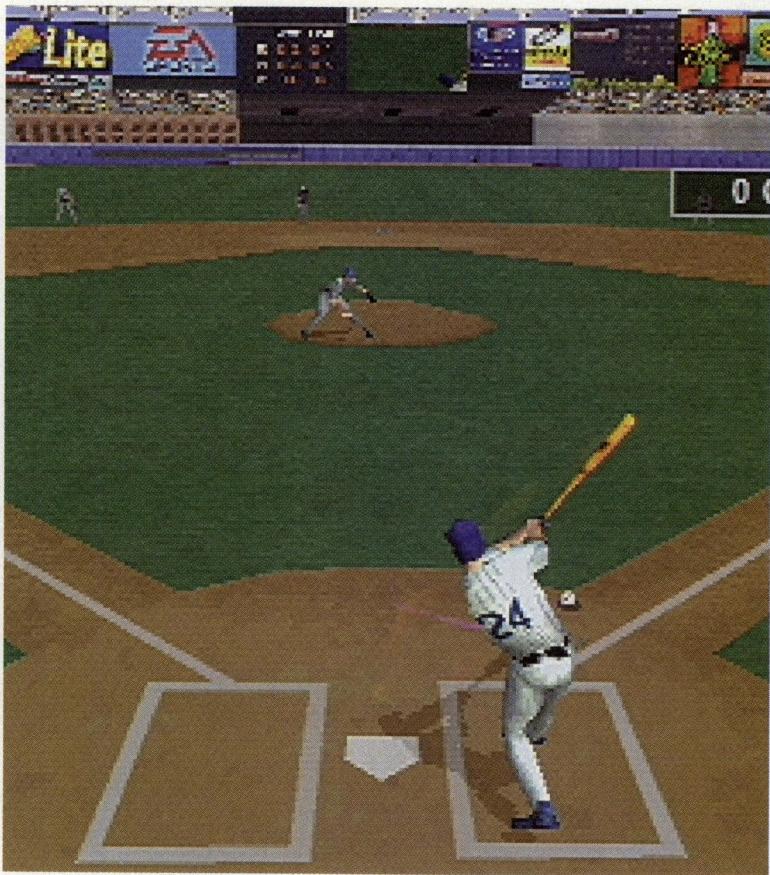
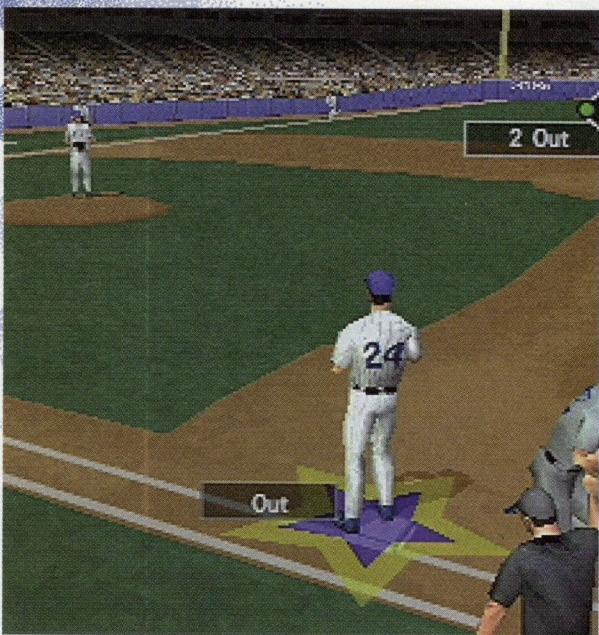
than all the *Madden* games put together. Play swings from end to end at a great pace, games go right to the wire and, with but one illegal (but allowed) interception, friendships will be threatened.

True, any real depth has been sacrificed for adrenaline, but sod that, *NFL Blitz 2000* is superb in that it actually makes American football fun. With your mates round and a few tinnies to hand, you need this game - and anyone who disagrees is aponce.

It's this
shirking of
traditional rules that
will gaul American
footy purists



A-Z OF SPORT



a-z of sport a-z of sport

Triple Play 2000

Style: Baseball sim

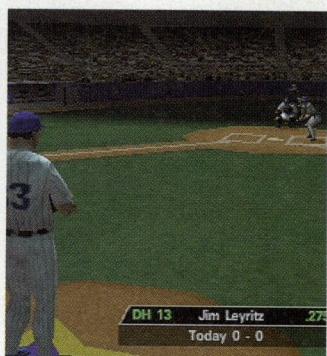
★★★

What's the key to EA's success?
Easy – just enhance and re-release last year's sports sim. By spooning its *FIFA*, *NHL* and *NBA* experience into what's basically a commercial game of rounders, EA has come up with a slick and stylish recreation of Major League ball-slugging.

Officially licensed, *Triple Play 2000* boasts real teams and real players and is jazzed up by in-game commentary and some impressive animation. But perhaps best of all, it's less of a stat-clogged sim and more of an arcade-orientated game, which makes it much easier for us to get the hang of.

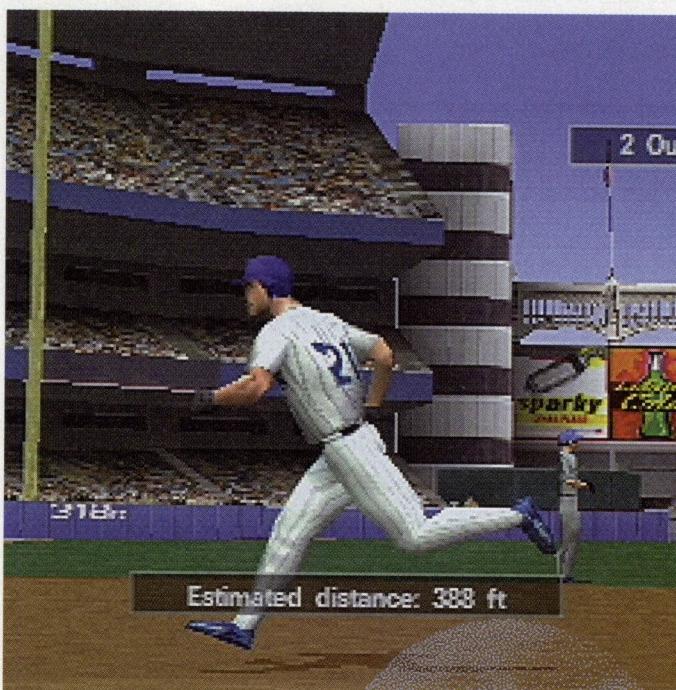
But does anybody really care? Television coverage of America's second-favourite sport falls woefully behind the Aussie desire to watch most other sports. This is a shame because, as usual, EA's game design is faultless. The on-screen action benefits from the television-style presentation, and there are a number of different gameplay options on offer.

One of the most impressive is the Home Run Challenge, where the aim is to crack more "homers" than your CPU-controlled opponent. Egged on by enthusiastic commentators and tracked by multiple camera angles, superbly-animated players thwack shots high into the stands and slide feet-first into bases. Playing as the pitching side, you can fiddle with field positions and throw four different styles of ball. Similarly, you can



adjust the batter's stance to determine how powerfully he strikes each pitch.

Transferring the *FIFA* design ethic to the world of pro-baseball, *Triple Play 2000* strikes just the right balance between number-crunching and entertainment. The pace is fast, the AI is competitive and the pseudo-realism sits easily with the game's more coin-oppy touches. While live baseball can drag on for an entire evening, *Triple Play 2000* condenses the best bits into an



easily digestible sporting snack. You can whizz through a match, striking a couple of satisfying home runs and sneaking bases while no one's looking.

Unfortunately, solid gameplay and graphical glitz may not be enough to convince the average gamer of *Triple Play 2000*'s merits. Accurately modelling Michael Owen is one thing, accurately modelling Mark McGwire is quite another. If you're currently thinking "Mark who?" you need not apply.

Superbly-animated players thwack shots high into the stands and slide feet-first into bases



Madden NFL 2000

Style: American football sim ★★★★☆

Just one play of *Madden NFL 2000* and you'll soon understand why it accurately reflects the brutal, take-no-prisoners appeal of America's favourite blood sport. Where else would commentators enthuse, "Whoa, there's a helmet loose!" obviously eagerly awaiting the first neck snap or knee-pop of the season?

The good news for rookies and American football experts alike is that this year's *Madden* looks just superb. Player photos pop up at every opportunity, you can view the action from nine camera angles and there are more stats than even the hungriest Statto could munch his way through.

While calling the plays is easy (because they're ones you've already selected from the playbook), actually getting them to work is a lot trickier. As with the real thing, gritty shoulder-pad-to-shoulder-pad running and blocking plays are a much safer bet than any of that flouncy "chuck the pigskin over the top" stuff. If you want to hold on to the ball to start with then you will need to keep it on the ground. And you will quickly learn that defence – especially when forcing the opposition into turnovers in their own half – is the best form of attack.

This incarnation of *Madden* captures the rhythm of each drive almost perfectly as you battle, not just against the other team but against the clock, to move upfield

and get on the scoreboard. There are a few minor grievances, however. The views are sometimes confusing, preventing you from seeing the real action, while playbook selection can get fiddly.

But to compensate, the grandstand atmosphere carries you along brilliantly. Games turn on split-second interceptions and spectacular bombs tossed into the end zone. Staggering moments which can be milked for all they're worth with a replay.

Madden NFL 2000 is more of a sim than an arcade game and so will never reach beyond the hardcore fans. That said, it could still teach many a soccer game a thing or two about capturing the true drama of a sporting contest.



Madden NFL '98

Style: American football sim

★★★★★

After a less than auspicious start with *Madden '97*, Electronic Arts' high-profile series game was back with a vengeance in 1998. At the time this was the first decent American football game ever to appear on the PlayStation, and remains a great play even now.

Don't let the graphics put you off, this is one of the most exciting and smoothly executed sports sims to come out of the Electronic Arts stable. And there are quite a few!

Madden NFL '99

Style: American football sim

★★★★★

In between the excellent *2000*, and the ground breaking *1998*, came *Madden '99*, and, in truth, it simply filled a gap. A great two-player game which provides days of fun. The gameplay is, again, without comparison. The only disappointment was that the improvements now seen in *2000* didn't come quickly enough.

Nevertheless if you can pick this up anywhere for a bargain then do so. It will provide the perfect introduction to American football on the PlayStation.



NFL Quarterback Club '97

Style: American football sim

★★★★★

Very competent American footy sim with

nothing to lift it above the norm. Plays very well, looks fine, but there's absolutely no reason to buy it when either *Gameday* and *Madden* can do the job better.

The stats are plentiful, and the presentation slick. The gameplay also follows the simplified interpretation which PlayStation games have tended to prefer. But when it comes to small touches such as commentary and handling, you just wouldn't put your money on this. It isn't bad by any means, but it just has no hook that would pull you in. Having said that, there is an emphasis on crowd chants and breaking bones, which is fun!

Like other formats before it, *Madden* rules gridiron on PlayStation



NFL Xtreme

Style: American football sim

★★★

Although the pattern on PlayStation has been to simplify the rules of American football to make the game more palatable to a wider audience, *NFL Xtreme* probably took the concept too far.

The graphics are smoothly animated and boast high resolution, and the action is instantly appealing. It's a fun action-packed game. Because of this, however, it tends to lack any depth and is, ultimately, quite repetitive. Certainly in one-player mode there is a distinct lack of variety. Amusing and enjoyable, but not very addictive. And not that 'extreme' either.

NFL Gameday

Style: American football sim

★★★★★

This was perhaps the first ever American footy game seen on PlayStation and immediately set the standard for others to follow. It turned a complicated sport into an uncomplicated game and used functional graphics rather than superb ones to illustrate the action. Certainly a revival for the much heralded *Madden* series.

A-Z OF SPORT



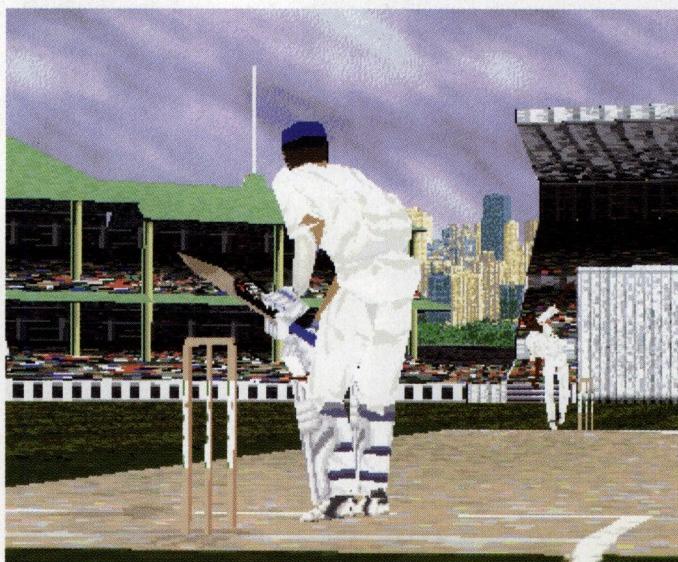
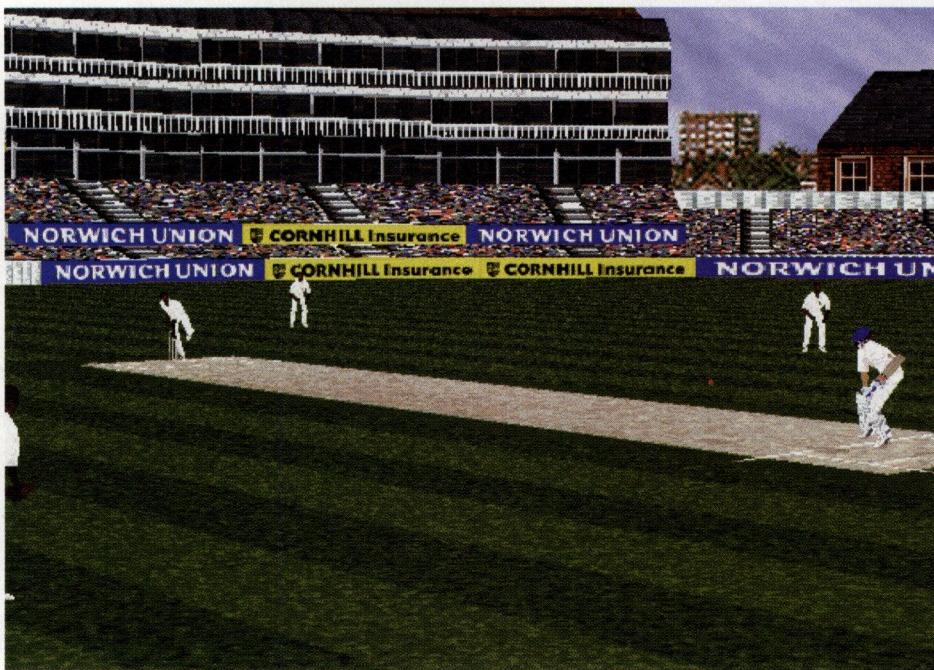
Shane Warne Cricket

Style: Cricket sim ★★★★☆

This really needs little introduction to Australian sports fans who own a PlayStation. It's one of the best-selling games ever Down Under and is much loved by critics and PlayStation owners alike.

The graphics are evocative and made up of motion-captured greatness. And despite a few moans, the gameplay is also a great representation of cricket. With a sport as popular as this, you're always going to find elements in a game that aren't perfect, but really this was a Godsend for cricket fans and didn't go far wrong. Well executed and enjoyable, if lacking a little in thrills. You can play anything from a five-over contest to a full-blown Test match. Or even repeat the World Cup Triumph of

1999. Hidden features allow you to play great matches from the past, and you can stuff your team full of legends. Bowling and batting are excellent fun and fielding is quite fluid. A game of high tempo, Test Matches can be over quickly, but hey, there's always another game.



a-z of sport a-z of sport

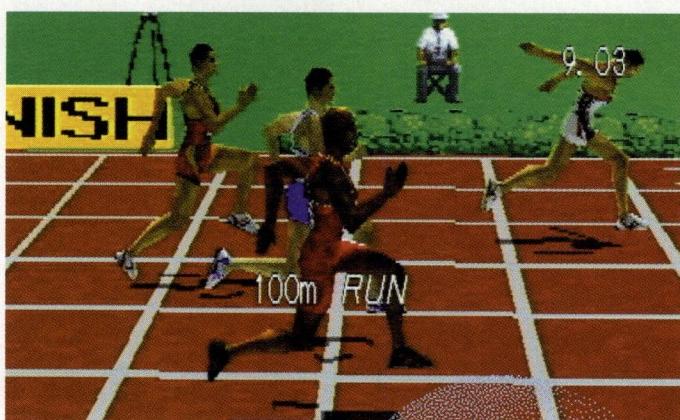
Int' Track & Field

Style: Button-bashing athletics

★★★★★

Remember when you were young, how you'd crowd round an arcade machine and make that little guy with a moustache run as fast as he could, nearly breaking your fingers in the process?

This is the 3D version with stunning graphics and bells and whistles. A perfect build-up to this year's Olympics, the game includes 100m, freestyle swimming, 110m hurdles, long jump, high jump, triple jump, pole vault, hammer, javelin, discus and shot put. Like the events themselves, some require skill, others just need brute force and endurance. All of them require blisters on your fingers. Addictive



against the AI and fun against mates this is a superb party game for sports fans. Great presentation and graphics add to the whole feel and the fluid animation make this a must-have for any sports' fan.

Olympic Games

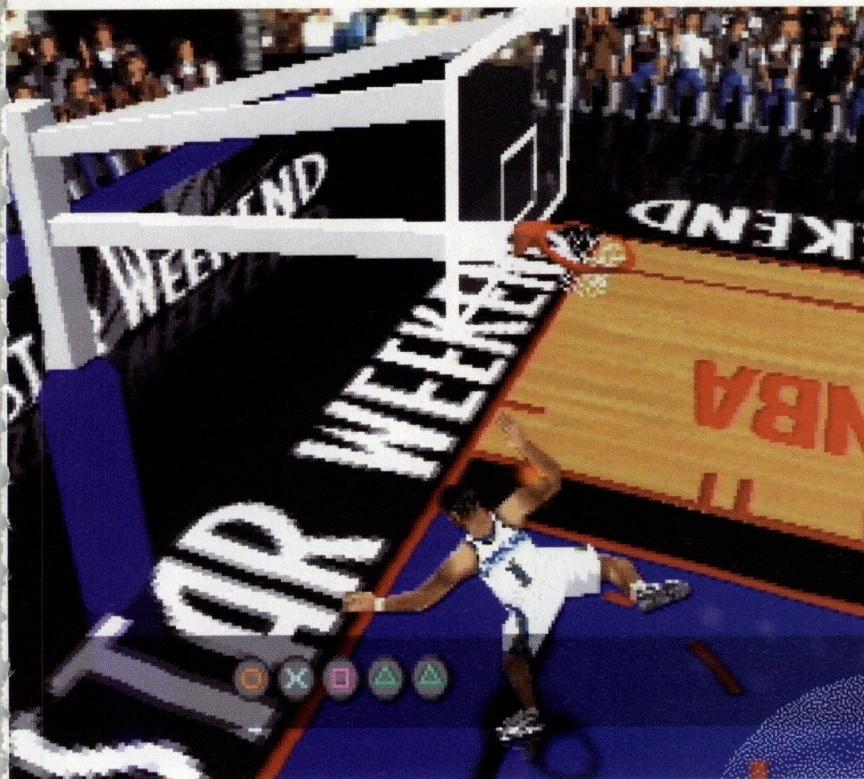
Style: Olympic Games Sim

★★★★

Produced for the 1996 Atlanta Games, this looks old and tired now, and to be honest looked that way at the time.

Including some different events to *Track and Field*, such as fencing, archery and weightlifting, adds a new dimension is added to the title, but it's actually less fun than you'd think. Graphics are blocky and dull, and the presentation is shabby. There is fun to be had with a group of friends, but lobbing stones into the sea can be fun with your mates too. Thoroughly average coverage of the Olympics - let's hope this summer has a few more thrills than this - or we're in big trouble.

This is a superb
party game for
sports' fans



NBA In The Zone '99

Style: Basketball sim ★★★

Another dose of officially-licensed NBA slam-dunking. *NBA In The Zone* is Konami's '99-styled entry into a crowded PlayStation sports market, that needs another basketball game like a moose needs a Psion Organiser. What it promises is "cutting edge sporting action" (at least until *NBA In The Zone 2000* comes along) – motion-captured players, end-to-end excitement, ice-white sneakers squeaking realistically on a wooden floor so polished you can see the reflection of the spotlights in it. Commentators urge the players on with a stream of enthusiastic jabber, while multiple camera angles give the whole package a Fox Sports kind of feel.

On the surface, there's very little wrong with *NBA In The Zone '99*. Beneath its cool exterior beats a gaming heart that has all the options a basketball fan could wish for. Players can take part in a one-off exhibition match, the NBA Playoffs or even an entire season. Or you can settle for something sweatier and far more quick-fix as you match up against the computer (or an opponent) for a Shoot-out or a Dunk Contest. And as with most other basketball games, you can play *NBA In The Zone '99* as realistically or as arcade-orientated as you want, delving into offensive and defensive strategies and tactics or switching them off for

a joypad-wrestling slamdunk-a-thon. You can even select what rules and regulations your players will observe during a match, so you can tailor each game to suit your own playing style. Options, options and more options. But then you'd expect nothing less of a modern basketball game.

So what's good about it? First, the presentation is undeniably classy – from the FMV-spiced opening credits to the in-game graphics (which are liberally enhanced by mugshots of basketball's current hoop-gods). Second, it's officially-licensed so basketball fans can pick their favourite team from either the Central, Pacific, Midwest or Atlantic leagues and play off against opponents with all their favourite players. Third, you can adjust your formations and strategies on the fly, allowing you to react to an opponent's tactics or to carve out brave new opportunities of your own. But again, you'd expect nothing less. All of the things that were once considered bells and whistles, such as commentary, multiple camera angles and dramatic action-replays, are now little more than standard issue.

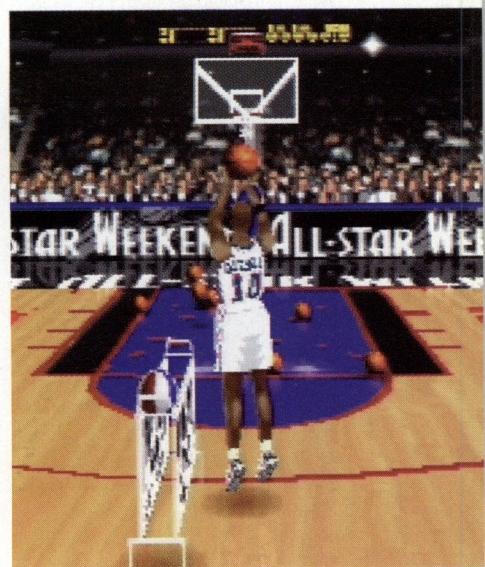
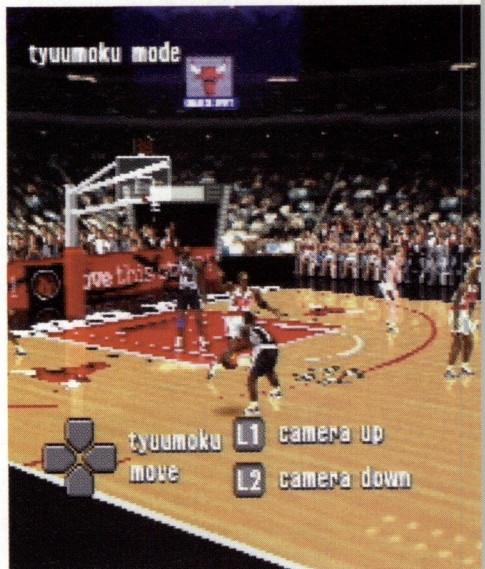
Which leads us to what's bad. Well, not bad exactly. Especially if bad is taken to mean cast it out, douse it with petrol, set fire to it and never let it darken your door

Let's face it, basketball is basketball

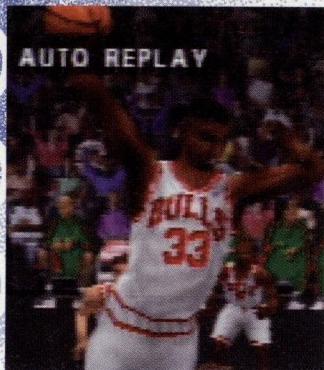


again. Disappointing is perhaps a better description. After all the glitz razzmatazz of the build-up, after all the multiple options and selectable/deselectable whatnots, the graphics come as something of a disappointment. In short, the players lack life, stiffly shuffling around the court passing, fouling, blocking, before slamming home a two-pointer. Breathlessly-animated or superbly-detailed are not phrases that you'd use to describe the main game engine. At best, it's spectacularly competent, and alongside the solid work that's been done in the rest of the game, it's easy to feel a little let down.

Because let's face it, basketball is basketball. You charge your players from one end of the court to the other, trying to lob the ball through a small, metal hoop. The crowd cheers, the commentator shouts something enthusiastic in praise of your scorer's athletic prowess, and the whole process begins again. Fun, fast and frantic it may be, but this latest version of *NBA In The Zone* lacks that spark of genius that would make it a great game. As it stands, it's an okay game. Magnificent in its mediocrity, it doesn't exactly break the basketball mould, but certainly chips a little bit off and scratches below the surface. But when you're spending \$90 on a game, you're right to expect more.



A-Z OF SPORT

**NBA Hangtime**

Style: Cartoon basketball



NBA Jam-style two-on-two basketball viewed side on, which is, unfortunately, over-simplified and has graphics which are too crude in today's market. The action is average and lacking in exciting, but it is the very poor graphics which detract from the overall effect. One of the small guys of basketball.

NBA In The Zone

Style: Basketball sim



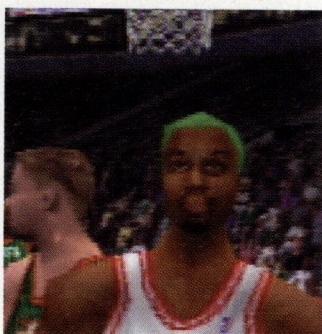
A straight-forward representation of basketball which was crashed under foot by its peers. Had the right licence, and flash-but-simple gameplay, but lacked the 'wow factor' to lift it above the norm. A very basic sports sim.

NBA In The Zone 2

Style: Basketball sim



Konami obviously learned from its mistakes because this was a much-improved version. Loads of realism, right down to the squeaky trainers, and a huge array of options to fiddle with. Once gameplay gets going it can be either a brainless arcade romp or a spot-on sim. Great basketball value.

**NBA In The Zone '99**

Style: Basketball sim



If it ain't broke don't fix it... After improving on their first incarnation, Konami then went and muddled things with too many FMV cut scenes and options. The game wasn't radically different to previous versions but the whole thing was a more confused package, which made the game less enjoyable. Average graphics and gameplay this time around meant there was no need to buy *Zone '99* and, to be honest, not many people did. A waste of a good licence and the people at Konami's time.

NBA Jam Extreme

Style: Arcade basketball



The most famous of the basketball games is the *Jam* series, and *Extreme* was the fourth incarnation. It wasn't significantly different from the original, other than the graphical effects of flaming hoops and whooshing moves. Fun!

NBA Jam Tournament Edition

Style: Basketball fun



As the first game onto the PlayStation courts, *Tournament Edition* will always have a special place in our hearts. Never had there been such positive hoo-hah about hoops. It was a rim-shaking, jamming basketball game, short on looks but high on excitement. It looks somewhat dated now but is still great fun with mates.

NBA Live '96

Style: Basketball sim



EA got the mechanics for its first basketball game right, but it lacked the fun and excitement of arcade-based basketball games. The graphics are also a bit blurry and the ball a bit small, which made play a bit difficult to follow. Like all EA sports games, the presentation was excellent, but the whole experience was a little sterile. Despite pandering to the flashier elements of basketball it still wasn't a slam-dunking game.

**NBA Basketball 2000**

Style: Basketball sim



Now, while basketball is a sport where the scores end up looking more like telephone numbers than the footy and soccer scores we're used to, there has to be more to the game than just scoring baskets. Unfortunately, not for Radical's *NBA Basketball 2000*, which has concentrated so heavily on the prowess of the hoops that it has forgotten all about what goes on in the rest of the court.

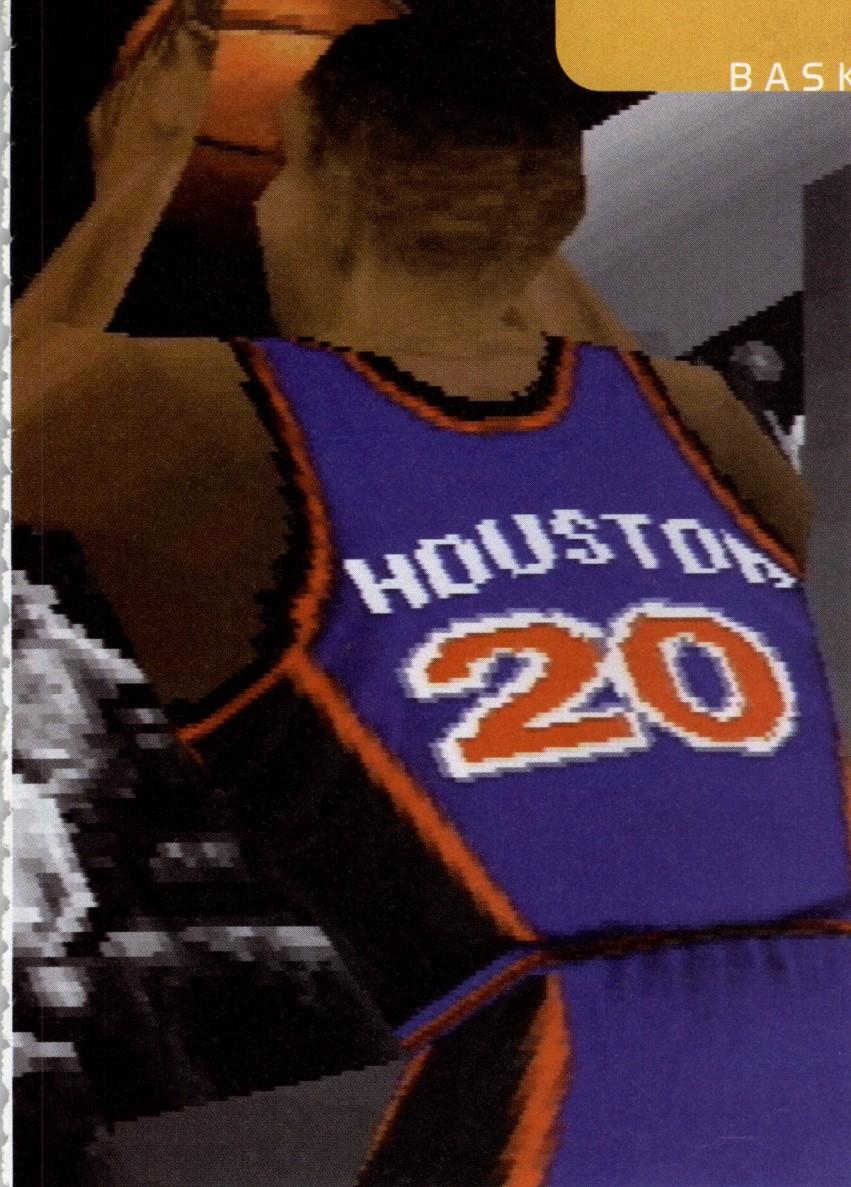
On the surface, everything that a right-thinking basketball game needs looks to be in place. There's an NBA licence – hardly an exclusive deal, but essential nonetheless – and all the teams

and players that go with it. There's a choice of season, play-off or exhibition play and the controls will be instantly familiar to anyone who has played a basketball game before. Opting for the tried and tested double-tap method for throws declares *NBA*'s desire to go for arcade accessibility over realistic simulation. But extended play reveals its basic flaws.

Starting off, it's easy to believe you're a natural as scoring a two-pointer in front of the basket is like shooting fish in a barrel. However, it soon becomes obvious that it's just as simple for your opponents to charge back down the court and

The fun of
frantically scoring
baskets and racking
up huge scores
means it's always
a laugh





score against you. Whichever strategy you choose, it's down to the whim of the AI whether the opposing team get a basket. And the AI sure is whimsical.

Difficulty levels seem to make little difference to the end results, because the games are nearly always extremely tight. Too often to be coincidental, the computer-controlled team will start fluffing baskets and turning over the ball if they've got the lead near the end of a match. If behind in the last quarter, they habitually foul your team every chance they get. They obviously know that the free throws – with an impossibly fast,

golf swing-style metre – will inevitably be missed, even though the vast majority of good shooters in the real NBA have an 80% plus success rate in this particular area. Catch-up logic is all very well, but not when it's this blatant.

The fun of frantically scoring baskets and racking up huge scores means *NBA Basketball 2000* is always a laugh, especially if you play with a friend. However, its fundamental gameplay flaws and the lack of strategy make it impossible to recommend to anyone looking for a balanced game, let alone a quality basketball sim.



NBA Live '97

Style: Basketball sim

★★★

Thoroughly recommended for NBA freaks, this 1998 version still lacked the excitement of its jamming peers. Great use of FMV and replicates American TV coverage brilliantly, but all we're interested in is playing an exciting game of basketball – and this isn't it. In fact, in many ways this even lacked the raw playability of its predecessor from 1996. Good atmosphere and presentation as you expect from EA.

NBA Live '98

Style: Basketball sim

★★★★

At last it all came together in one basketball game for EA. The graphics were as smooth as Rodman's cropped hair, the presentation and cut scenes were slicker than ever, but the gameplay was also totally addictive. The 'one more go' factor was at last there. Another year on and another step up the ladder for the EA basketball series. One of the funniest features is the split-screen three-point shoot off. Try playing it with friends and you'll have a scream. As far as basketball sims go though, this is as close as you can get to the real thing in terms of play, looks and the overall general experience of basketball. Seek it out.



NBA Pro 98

Style: Basketball sim

★★★

A perfectly good sim, from the makers of the *In The Zone* series. If it wasn't for the existence of EA's *Live* series and Sony's *Total NBA* games we'd whole-heartedly recommend this. Finely balanced sports sim combining gameplay and graphics to good effect. It just lacks the polish and excitement of its more famous friends.

Lacks the polish and excitement of its famous friends

Total NBA '97

Style: Basketball sim

★★★★★

The doyen of sporting simulations. Brilliant visuals, fantastic animation and gameplay straight from the top drawer. The game's presentation is without equal, and you really can't get a better game than this – especially if you manage to pick it up cheaply. Time has not withered its brilliance, but hopefully it might have eroded its price tag. *Total NBA*, the original game was breathtaking when first released and this improved further on that. We love this game.



NBA Live '99

Style: Basketball sim

★★★★

And this was even better still! Exciting for the novice, absorbing for the die-hard fan, EA just keep getting better and better at producing basketball games. Smooth, sharp, stylish, with heaps of fluid and varied moves. Play this and have a ball.

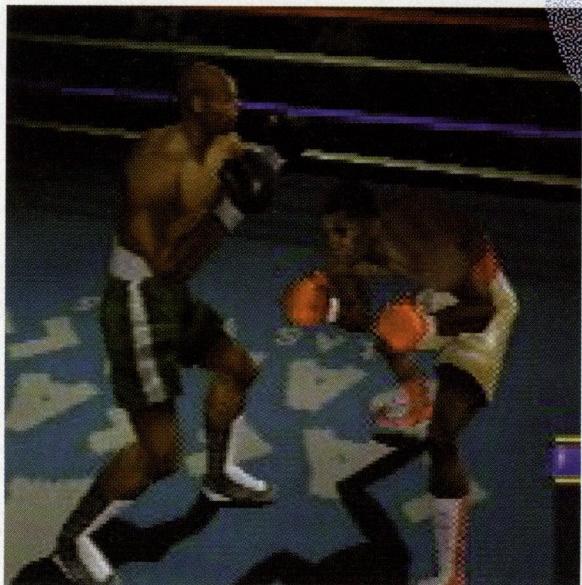
Total NBA '98

Style: Basketball sim

★★★★★

No worse than its predecessor, but because we'd become expected to such leaps in technology, this was something of a disappointment. Still it had the squeak of trainers and slam-dunking realism, combined with great animation. The two-player mode is superb fun too. Given the choice between this and the '97 version you'd probably go for this, but only if they're the same price. If '97 is cheaper, then get that.

A-Z OF SPORT



RAY LEONARD

OSCAR DE LA HOYA



Knockout Kings 2000

Style: Boxing sim



The Marquis of Queensbury may have drawn up the rules as long ago as 1867, but we're still waiting for software developers to apply them successfully to a videogame. *Knockout Kings 2000* is the latest EA Sports' franchise, but one which hasn't quite got to grips with its sport as well as the all-conquering *FIFA* or *Madden* franchises.

It would appear that replicating boxing as a videogame isn't easy. Unlike the average beat 'em up, boxing isn't some abstract creation that can be made up or modified to suit the twin demands of format limitations and gameplay. We know

what boxing is. We have expectations. We're hard to please. And for \$90, so we should be.

Like the majority of beat 'em ups *Knockout Kings 2000* locks you on the same axis as your opponent, while punches are triggered by combining buttons with D-pad moves. The shoulder buttons give access to body punches and vital defensive guards for both head and body, although this is where the most serious problem lies.

Yes, there's a satisfying array of jabs, crosses and uppercuts – as well as rabbit punches, head butts and low blows for the less scrupulous – but actually having a tactical fight is nigh-on impossible given the amount of buttons and the fingerwork involved. It's hard to go fast enough between punching and guarding to meet the demands of either the higher level opponents or your own reactions. The switch from defence to attack is just not instinctive enough.

The fights, although geared towards attack, can be very satisfying



Ready 2 Rumble

Style: Arcade boxing



It was a man with an immaculate tan who coined the "let's get ready to rumble" catchphrase. Every American boxing fan is familiar with suave-yet-hysterical ringside MC Michael Buffer, who presides over this colourful display of PlayStation pugilism.

That *Ready 2 Rumble* is endorsed by an announcer rather than a boxer underlines its showbiz leanings. Anyone who still believes boxing to be a noble art may be offended by *Ready 2 Rumble*'s vision of the sport's future as a freakshow of WWF proportions. The cartoonish cast of fighters all boast catchphrases, insults and individual celebratory routines which make Prince Naseem's antics seem like the prelude to a Scrabble championship in comparison.

A great deal of mirth can be generated from the mismatch of physiques obtained by pitting camp sumo Salua Tua against Afro Thunder, a boxer who always looks more likely to throw down a breakdance move than land a punch. There's also Big Willie Johnson, a '30s throwback with a none-too-stiff upper lip, and Lulu Valentine, the jumpsuited minx who insists she's not just a pretty face. The characters are detailed and a perceptive sense of humour that's quite rare in videogames. In your early fights, the apathetic crowd will reward your efforts with a slow handclap while your helium-voiced coach does his nut in the corner. Perfect atmospherics.

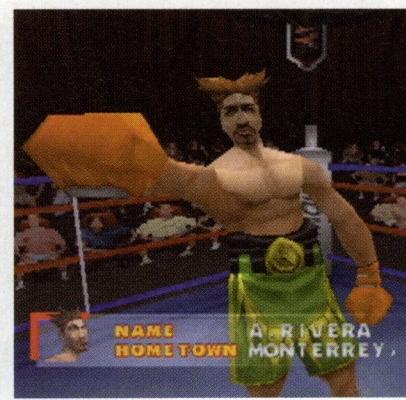
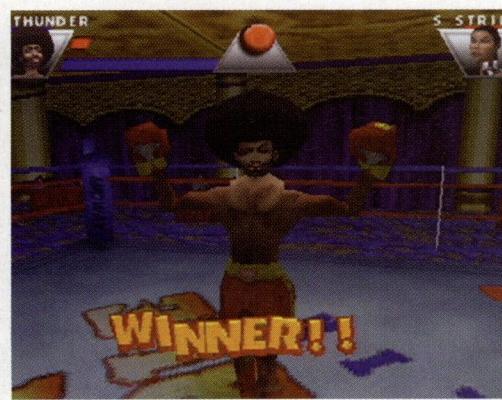
Naturally, such a gloriously-warped bunch of boxers have little truck with the Queensbury rules. Each character has their own unique moves and combos – they don't quite match *Street Fighter* levels of insanity, but they're rather



A game which expects you to have your mates primed for the onset of brain damage

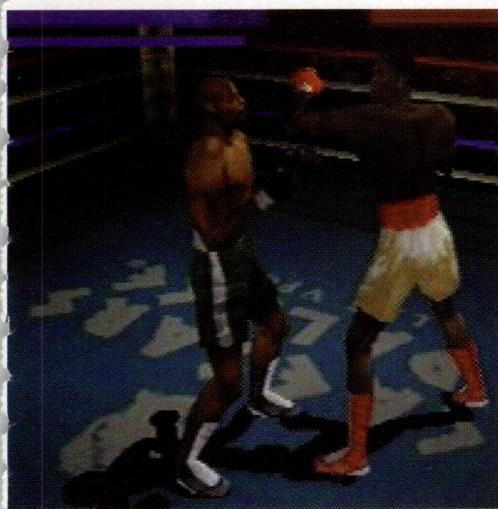
2 Rumble isn't the game for you. The Championship Mode requires you to rescue another teenager from a life of crime and turn them into a boxing champ, but this is a goal which can only really be obtained by continuously fighting the computer. There are training routines, but these aren't challenging enough to function as mini-games in their own right.

Then again, single-player satisfaction isn't really the function of *Ready 2 Rumble*. It's a game which fully expects you to have your mates primed for the onset of brain damage. If you are looking for a showbiz take on the genre, *Ready 2 Rumble* is a terrific blast which catches the *Knockout Kings* series leaden-footed. You may not be splayed out on the canvas, but *Ready 2 Rumble* will definitely have you on the ropes.



Still, as the healthy score would suggest, there's much to enjoy in *Knockout Kings 2000*. Actually being Muhammad Ali, Jake La Motta, Sugar Ray Leonard and the other all-time greats is a lot of fun and the fights, although geared towards attack rather than defence, can be very satisfying. You can even recreate classic bouts from the past, rewriting history as you go. Your punches do have real weight and putting your opponent on the canvas is always gratifying. And when the appeal of taking a fighter up the ranks dulls, there are always the two-player slugfests for you and a mate to engage in. The charms of multi-player fighting games should never be underestimated.

Knockout Kings 2000 is currently the undisputed champion of boxing sims, then, but given the competition that doesn't exactly make it a heavyweight. Without doubt a fun bout, but one for true fight fans only.



A-Z OF SPORT



Ballblazer

Style: Futuristic soccer hockey

★★★

In a galaxy light years from Earth. *Ballblazer* was created in a bid to replace wars. It is a cross between hockey and soccer, in theory, although apart from a goal at each end it's hard to see the similarities. The object of the game is to shoot a ball of plasma into the goal and prevent your opponent doing the same. Not only can you tackle them, but you can also use weapons to shoot them – hardly cricket, if you ask us. Surprisingly this gladiatorial ball game remains low on violence. It also, if truth be told, lacks appeal. We really can't see this one replacing normal sports and don't think it'll catch on – still a million aliens aren't necessarily wrong.

Bloodlines

Style: Brutal futuristic sport

★★★★★

Bloodlines is rather like the sort of event you get in the television show *Gladiators*. The object is to run around an assault course collecting flags in an attempt to beat your opponent. The graphics are dark and atmospheric, the action is fast and furious, and no doubt three hundred years from now they'll be playing this when they get home from futuristic pubs. In the meantime, us mere Earthlings find the one-player mode slightly tedious and conversely the multi-player game is far too mental. Fiddly controls and poor collision detection can make action stilted rather than smooth. A fun enough game, but surely not sport?

Dead Ball Zone

Style: Brutal futuristic netball

★★★

A cross between netball and rugby using the ubiquitous plasma ball, *Dead Ball Zone* is an attempt to recreate the old Amiga game *Speedball*. With an eight-person team you throw the ball about at will, trying to avoid a kick in the nuts from opponents. Stick one in the net and you get a point – avoid being shot in the meantime.

Dodgem Arena

Style: Futuristic dodgems

★★

Canada is the super power of the 21st century supposedly (they had better get a move on, then) and the sport of choice is ice hockey in levitating sleds. Rather like *Wipeout* meets *NHL*. The result is something every bit as stupid as it sounds. The only consolation with *Dodgem Arena*, is that while you're busy shooting weapons at each other and trying to score goals, at least it's not like real dodgems.



Eliminator

Style: Futuristic tag

Imagine playing tag in a 3D environment while flying one of the hovercraft from *Wipeout*?

Sounds fantastic doesn't it? And that's how this game is pitched. Only problem is that the environments are poor, the ships are terrible and a real game of tag would have been more fun. This is a turbo-charged shooting gallery in which you roam around like a teenager driving their first car round a deserted car park. It's uninspiring

The environments are poor and the ships are terrible

in every single department, and mediocre in the extreme. It's like PlayStation by numbers with little innovation and even less entertainment. The graphics are chunky and look unfinished, and mass explosions can't disguise the barren backdrops. Of a genre full of mediocre titles, this one really does take the biscuit.

a-z of sport a-z of

Pitball

Style: Futuristic rugby

★★★★★
As much a beat 'em up as a sports sim this makes the average League game look like a playground fight. As a futuristic character you must do battle for that ball of plasma once again dressed as a comic super hero, and score by dumping the thing in a bin. Interesting aspect of this one is that you have the

ability to bribe opponents and there is even a management aspect in the game. Good looking, fast and furious, *Pitball* is actually quite good fun. Although one major criticism is the number of buttons and combinations on the joypad you're required to use. Makes for quite a steep learning curve.

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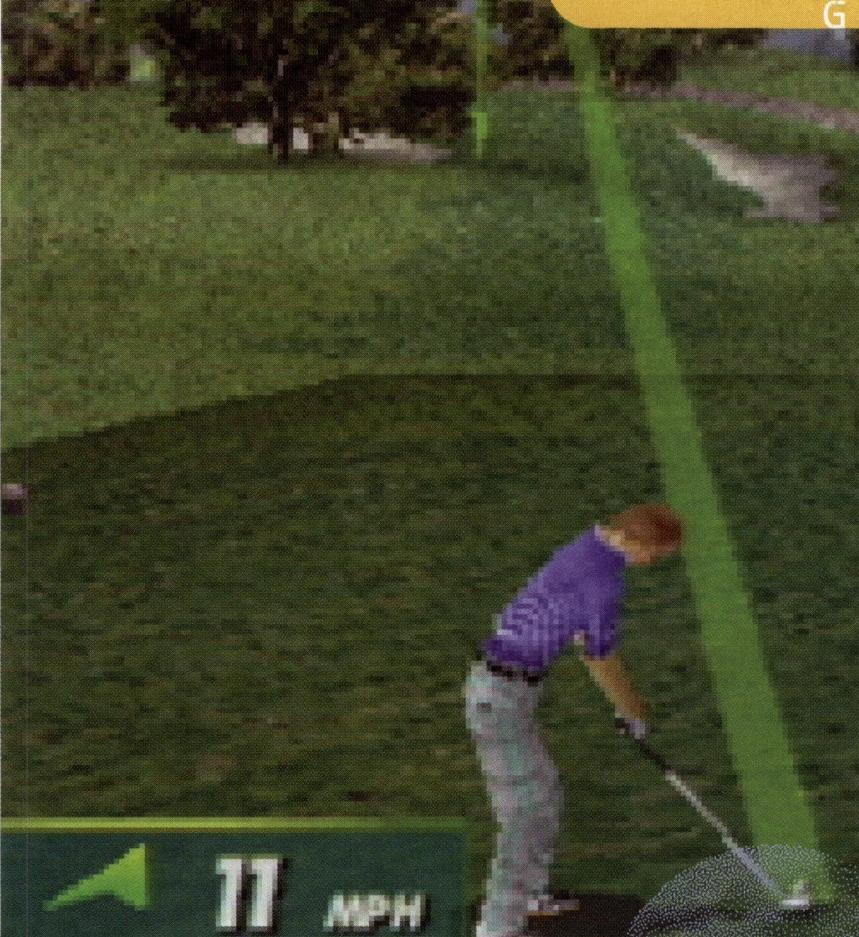


Riot

Style: More plasma dunking

★★★
This is like a futuristic attempt to post a letter while rugby players try to protect the mail box. Drop your glowing orb in the slot and you score points. Easier said than done though when opponents are trying to beat you up in the process. Dressed like an American footballer you play on an oval pitch and the number of points you score depends on where you shoot from.

Graphics are excellent and the moody stadiums and intense atmosphere together with the neon signs and special effects mean that the whole experience is exciting. Like any futuristic sport though it's difficult to tell if you're being skillful because there's no real-life version of the sport to compare it to. How do you know if you've scored a good goal or not?



European PGA Golf

Style: Golf sim

★★★★★

Though most golf games look so similar that even their mothers can't tell them apart, the *Actua* series has consistently clubbed all of its PlayStation rivals into second place. Now, with its swanky PGA licence reflected in the name change, *EPGA Golf* has upped the ante again by including real golf courses for the first time. There are seven famous courses altogether, headlined by San Roque in Spain and the K Club in Ireland. Some of the more famous courses such as St Andrews and The Belfry are noticeable by their absence.

Naturally, *EPGA Golf* offers everything you might expect from a golf game and even a few things that you wouldn't! On top of all the strokeplay, matchplay and fourball options, Infogrames has thrown in some 'fun games'. These are slight deviations from the traditional golf theme, like the clock game where each shot is timed and a weird night-time game that tries rather pathetically to pass off the illusion of darkness by colouring the sky black. Why you'd want to play at night anyway is anyone's guess.

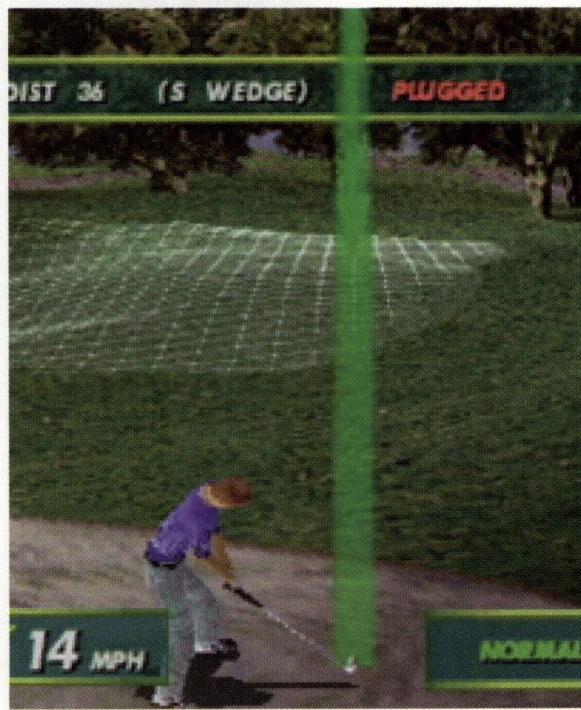
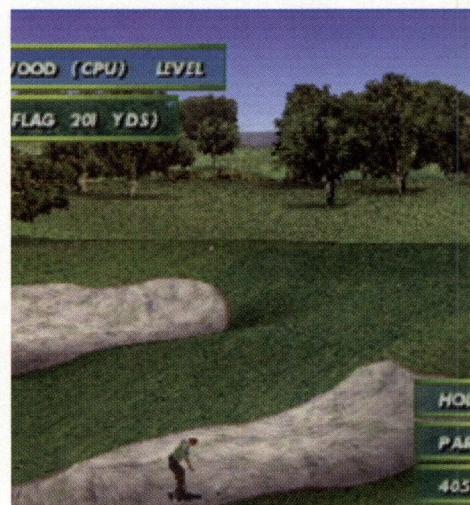
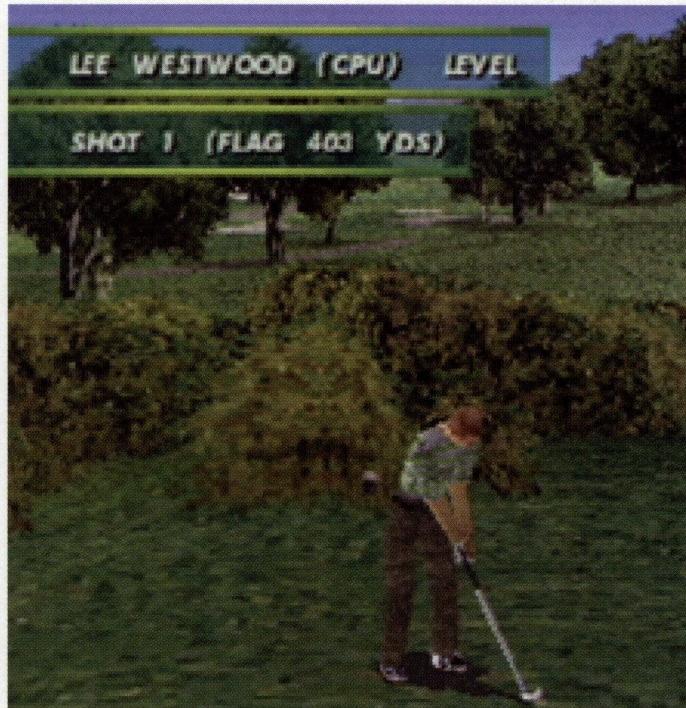
The best play option is undoubtedly the Career mode. From here, you can customise your own golfer and rise like a delicious blob of cream up through the amateur

This fourth game in the *Actua* series is the best yet

ranks, through the professional orders and on to the EPGA Tour itself. Here you can challenge the likes of Colin Montgomerie for ownership of Europe's biggest golfing wedge. A word about the CPU golfers they aren't exactly accurate. Since when was Monty 10 stone?

EPGA Golf does have its handicaps though. While the ball physics are fine, the actual playing surface behaves as though it's made of glass rather than grass. This is extremely annoying, especially when your ball lands on a gentle hill and continues to roll until it hits a bunker. The other problem is that it's all a bit too easy. The control system is nothing new and by following exactly what the computer caddy advises, you'll find yourself 'up and down in two' and making birdies far too often.

But despite the teeth-grinding frustrations, this fourth game in the *Actua Golf* series is the best yet. The analogue control system is particularly admirable as the stick imitates a golf swing, while the number of options and courses should keep golf aficionados and armchair Sergio Garcias more than happy. At least the rent-a-mob Americans don't get a look in.



A-Z OF SPORT



Cyber Tiger

Style: Golf sim ★

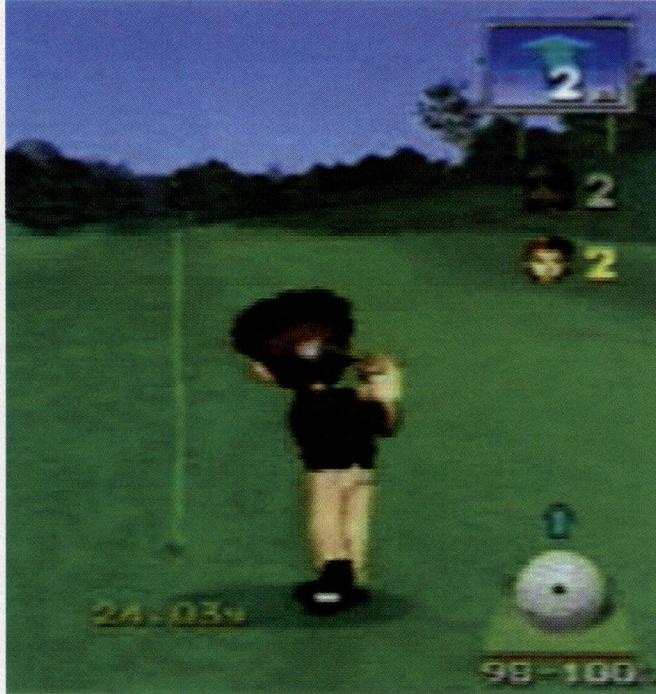
Pro celebrity golf is taken more seriously in Australia than it is in, say, the UK, where they bring out their aged, once-funny comedians to play a few rounds while cracking 'jokes'. In that respect the abysmal *Cyber Tiger* has more in common with the UK pro celeb tournaments than with our home-grown variety.

Cyber Tiger is so far below par it hurts. For one thing the name's just appalling, conjuring an image of the final exhibit in Sony's robot animal programme, as opposed to an amateurish animated golf game featuring golf star, Tiger Woods. Cartoony graphics blend with flat backgrounds that give no points of reference for accurate shots.

Not that any of your shots will go where you want them to, especially if you're using Analogue mode, in which the joystick flicks the ball up the course. It feels a bit like playing Tiddlywinks – only not as exciting. Especially when the shot goes tees up and Tiger's irritating little snigger kicks in.

There's nothing here to warrant playing for any longer than two minutes. File under Games From Hell.

**It feels a bit
like playing
Tiddlywinks – only
not as exciting**



Everybody's Golf

Style: Golf sim



Every once in a while, a real treat arrives in the PlayStation office. Usually it's a game we've hardly heard about (which often means that it's Japanese), or one we have heard of but expect to be poor. What makes the latter a treat is that, when we divest it of its bubblewrap and slip it into one of our grey wonders, we discover to our surprise that it is, in fact, a marvellous game. It's the unexpected nature of this surprise that makes it so great.

So it is with *Everybody's Golf*. In this case, we hadn't heard of it before we previewed it and when we saw the name on the disc we were hardly enthralled. Golf games don't usually make it into our top 10 of hot and desirable pastimes. But *Everybody's Golf* is an absolute cracker. Japanese in its origin, it's a classic golf game with the old "one tap to determine power and one to determined accuracy" control system. As you can see, instead of the standard trying-to-be-realistic-as-possible graphics of the likes of *Actua* and *PGA*, it has cutesy cartoon graphics and Manga characters.

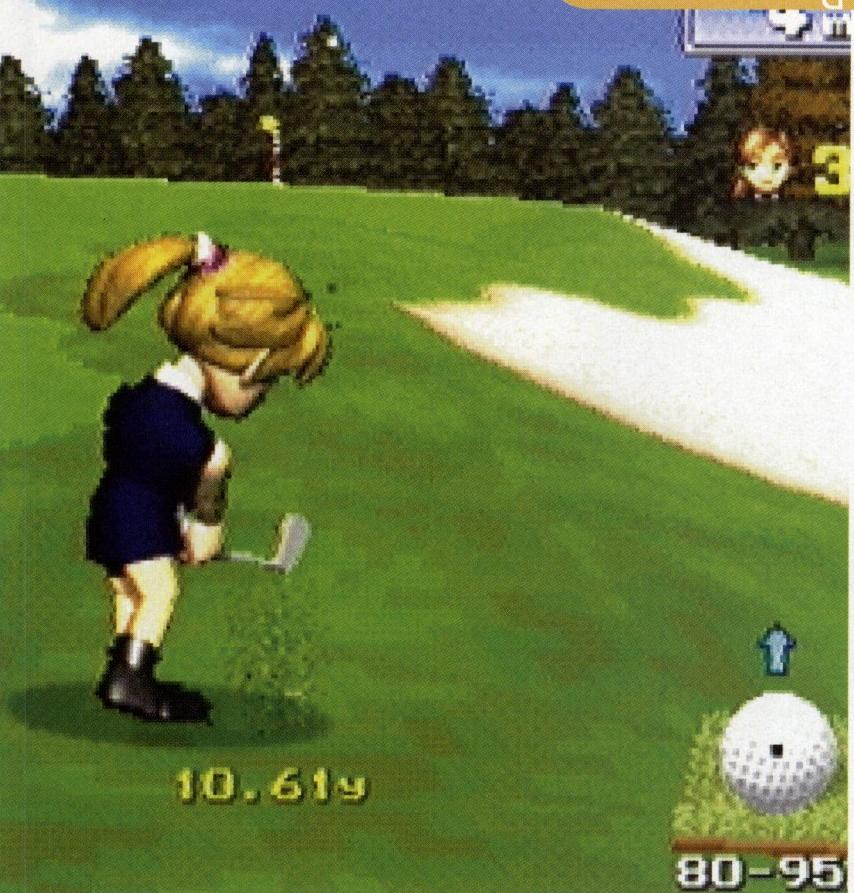
It's not that *Everybody's Golf* offers anything particularly new – it doesn't. Instead it's like a distillation of all the golf games that have ever graced your console, and the result is a thicker, more interesting game – and one with a bit of kick too.

Everybody's Golf is simply a joy to play. It has a superb engine

that enables you to do anything you've ever seen done on a golf course (and, like all good games, the tricky stuff is a bit easier than in real life). It's really fast (an 18-hole tournament round can be completed in about half an hour if you're really steaming), and it manages to capture all the joy and frustration of the tensest golf match you've ever witnessed.

It's also a very cleverly paced game. In the beginning, you're allowed access to only one character and one course. The course is easy – with short holes and not many obstacles – and so is your character. Each new character is rated by three attributes: power, concentration and spin. Your first character has low power (and so doesn't hit the ball very far), high concentration (which means that the moving bar is slower when you're taking a shot, making it much easier to hit the shot you want) and low spin (so you can't do all that much with the ball except hit it straight). As you gain access to new characters by beating them in the Vs mode, you'll find that your power and spin capabilities tend to increase while your concentration lessens; you have to be more proficient at the game to exploit these capabilities to the full.

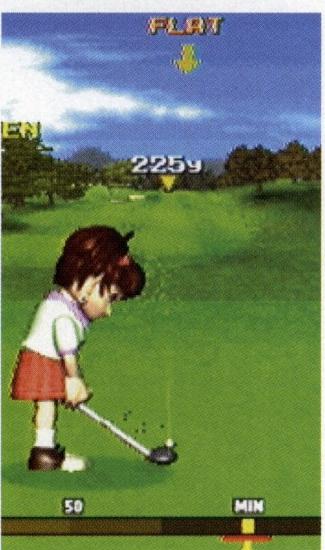
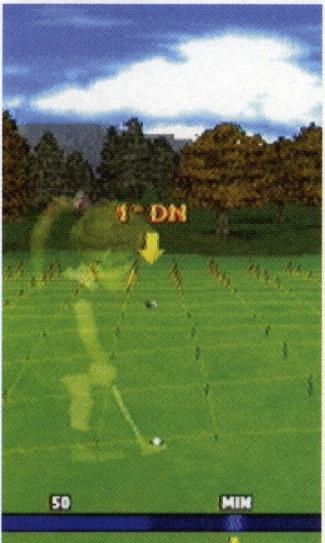
There are five courses for you to tackle (and a special secret challenge after that, which we won't spoil for you). You take part in tournaments, collecting



experience points for winning and for playing good golf (the game awards you points for under-par and difficult shots). On top of that, you get 10 very different characters, who only become available as you play against and beat them. All of this gaining of new characters and courses is absorbing and fun. It takes a long time too and, in that respect, *Everybody's Golf* represents really good value for money.

Up to four people can play at once, which makes this a great party game, and the solo play offers easily the best fun we've had from a golf title, with tournaments to compete in and trophies to collect (the game even remembers which trophies you've won so far, and you can gaze at them whenever you like), which is why *Everybody's Golf* is the best golf game we've come across for the PlayStation. It'll even automatically save your greatest shots for posterity – so that your fantastic hole-in-one will never, ever be lost.

This isn't the game to buy if you want to take part in the Master's or your dream is to "be" Nick Faldo, but if that's your ambition you're probably better off on a real golf course than sat at home in front of the gogglebox. However, if you like your golf game that's fun and challenging, then you should try *Everybody's Golf*. It does exactly what it says on the package.



Actua Golf 3

Style: Golf sim



An ugly, slightly scruffy appearance, and we don't just mean Colin Montgomerie. This is a game for the dedicated golfer alone, others will question its visuals and dated control system and turn to other better games on offer. Plenty of modes to try though.

Honami Open Golf

Style: Golf sim



It's a golf sim alright, but it lacks polish, innovation and that important ingredient, fun. We suggest you look elsewhere for clubular activities and avoid the below average golfing fare on offer in this game.

PGA Tour '97

Style: Golf sim



Although this has been surpassed by other golf games, at the time it was the best golf game on the market. If you find it in a bargain bin now then snap it up. Great licence and good graphics together with intuitive gameplay. Plus men in funny coloured trousers. What else do you need?

PGA Tour '98

Style: Golf sim



More of the EA golfing magic. A great golf game that's well worth a look if you don't have any in your collection. Splendid commentary, great control system and loads of options to try.

Pro 18 World Tour Golf

Style: Golf sim



With EA dominating the market, Psygnosis did well to compete on level terms with this straightforward sim. Lacks the PGA licence, but in terms of serious golfing depth this is as good as it gets. Great graphics and control system. This won't appeal to anyone other than serious golf fans, but, as far as they're concerned, this is at the top of the leader board with EA's PGA series. A fine game indeed.



Tiger Woods '99

Style: Golf sim



If you've never played a golf sim then maybe it'd be good to start here. However, the jagged graphics and showbiz extras will be a turn off to the purist. It's easy to pick up, but perhaps just as easy to put down. Too simple and irritating to warrant long play.

Virtual Golf

Style: Golf sim



Before going on to make *Tomb Raider*, Core Design warmed up with a few rounds of golf. They shouldn't have bothered. It was very average fare, notable only for the garish colours of the courses and golfers. Plenty of courses, easy to play and with all the options you'd want, just don't expect to become addicted to this particular title. Oh and a word of warning, make sure you wear your sunnies when you play it or expect your retinas to be frazzled by the multicolours.



World Cup Golf

Style: Golf sim



A very ordinary version of 'the long walk ruined' as Mark Twain once said. This is not exactly the golf game ruined, but there certainly isn't a great deal of excitement to be had here either.

Lovely palm trees and greens, and lots of chirping birds give a very relaxed atmosphere, but the gameplay isn't as sharp as others and the graphics are slightly hazy. The main problem with the game, however, is the lack of difficulty levels, which means a lack of depth and longevity for players hoping to improve their game.

A-Z OF SPORT

A-Z OF SPORT

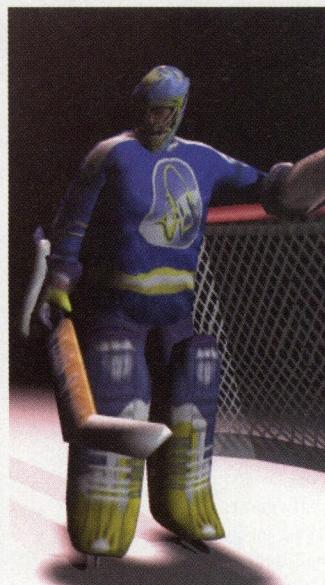


Actua Ice Hockey 2

Style: Ice hockey sim



An excellent incarnation of this exciting videogame sport but with a few niggles. For a complete review of the game turn to page 62 now. Better still read what we say *and* try out our demo on the disc attached to the magazine. Enjoy!





NHL Face Off 2000

Style: Ice hockey sim



As a nation we may be rubbish at ice hockey, but we can still appreciate that it contains all the ingredients necessary to make the ideal videogame sport. The speed, the violence, the crazed slapping in front of goal Truly, this is excitement. Something which explains why so many NHL branded games wash up on our fair weather shores.

NHL Face Off 2000 is the latest to cross the pond and offers all the usual puckery, plus a management section that lets you sign, release and trade players between teams. If you want to, you can add to the rosters with players of your own creation, allocating points to various stats (you can even ramp up your aggression and fighting skills).

There's much to satisfy here, even if you aren't in it for the authenticity, with various pre-game renditions of *The Star Spangled Banner*, plenty of Wurlitzer ditties, a surplus of violent checks and controllable one-on-one fights.

Superbly, fighting forms a kind of sub-game, with four buttons controlling ducks, slaps, uppercuts and blocks. It's an amusing diversion that adds extra venom to multi-player games, but doesn't dominate the play. The sound effects are great, genuinely recreating the ambience of a stadium rink. The player cards also make for a fascinating study of the

Superb fighting forms a kind of sub-game

mullet haircut in 20th century team-based sport.

But it's the new I.C.E. Artificial Intelligence that gives the game its main edge over EA's *NHL 2000*. CPU opponents now camp in front of the net, waiting for redirected passes, while defensive players make unpredictable rushes into the offensive zone and circle the box during penalties. The enhanced AI is most noticeable in the goalies, who make a fantastic variety of saves, including glove, stick, chest, kick and block. They will do anything to cover the goal, sprawling widthways and even lying on their backs to smother a rogue puck. This makes scoring a real challenge and you have to learn the extensive range of shots, such as slap shots, snap shots, fake shots and redirected shots to fool the Michelin-styled goalie and stick one in the net.

Unfortunately, *Face Off 2000* looks terrible. Despite 150 motion-captured animations the graphics really let the game down. Where *NHL 2000* boasts stylish reflections, *Face Off* can only muster dull four-way shadows cast by the floods. It's certainly fast, real and raw, but it's no great beauty.

NB: *Face Off* may only just have arrived in your shops because it is an extremely recent release. Hence we have also included the game in our Incoming section at the front of the mag. Watch out for it!



NHL Championship 2000

Style: Ice hockey sim



Aiming to succeed where *NHL Face Off '99* and *NHL Powerplay Hockey* failed, Activision's *NHL Championship 2000* is the latest pretender to EA's ice hockey throne. It's a tall order, but *NHL 2000* is slicker and quicker than ever before. So what does this latest frost-fest have to offer?

Does it have all the official razzmatazz of real ice hockey? Are all 28 NHL teams represented in such visual detail that you can see their ugly mugs as they play? The answer to both is 'yes'.

NHL Championship 2000 looks so similar to *NHL '99* that it's hard to tell them apart. Enhanced with FMV of rink action, play is structured around some excellent TV-style presentation. So authentic are the camera angles, stats and real-time commentary, it's like controlling your own live TV coverage.

The superb motion-captured players glide realistically across the

ice, complete with accurate 3D team strips. However, the basic game remains simple. It's a *Destruction Derby* of skidding flesh and padding, with the sole aim to strike a toilet-freshener into a tiny goal.

Most ice hockey games don't have a problem with the mechanics. The way to impress comes down to the graphics and the stats. To its credit, Activision scores highly here too. Having created a challenging 'Sportal Kombat', it has backed it up with slow-mo replays, realistic rosters, coaching tactics and modes that allow you to play one-offs or fully-fledged championship seasons.

Tweakable rules and three difficulty levels mean that everyone can get to grips with the basics. Great presentation and gameplay that's instantly accessible but puts up a decent fight, mean that Activision's game will still be standing its ground when *NHL 2000* tries to barge it into the crowd.

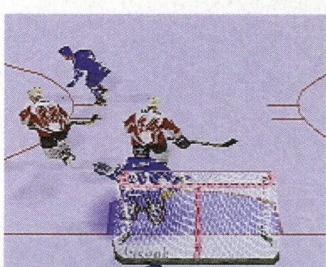
a-z of sport a-z

NHL '99

Style: Ice hockey sim



As in many other sports, EA dominates here with its authenticity to the real game and brilliant presentation. Smooth, colourful and polished graphics, together with excellent gameplay mean you can play this forever – or at least until the next sequel. More clever and more violent than previous versions and with the best licence money



can buy. Be warned you have to play it to death to get the most out of it, but if patience is one of your traits then get to the shops now.

a-z of sport a-z

NHL Face Off '99

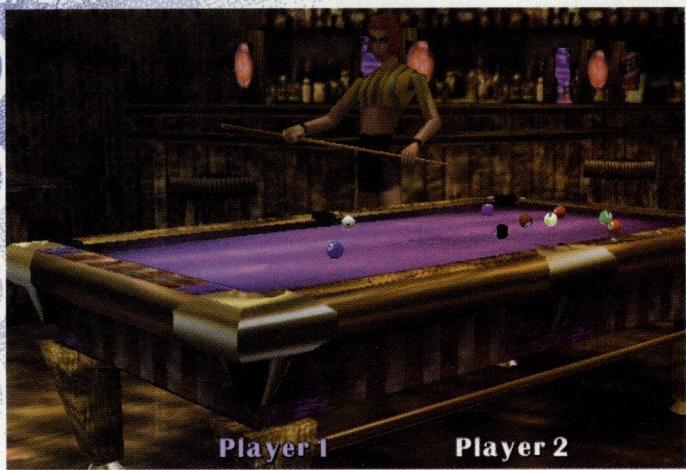
Style: Ice Hockey sim



Displaying depth and finesse this is a puck-whacking marvel of a game that finally brings some competition to EA's domination of the ice. The graphics are beautiful

and teamwork, fisticuffs and tactics are all present and correct. Sony has done well to take on the might of Electronic Arts on its own patch and have come away with a creditable draw. Or perhaps, at worst, a small defeat. We look forward to the rematch with eager anticipation. It'll be a close game.

A-Z OF SPORT

**Pool Hustler**

Style: Pool sim



The first question we should really ask is whether there is any place for a pool game on the PlayStation.

Sports sims are understandable because they are a small-scale representation of an energetic sports game. They are TV spectator-friendly sports transformed into an interactive experience. Surely pool is a game which is best played at the pool hall with your mates. The worst example of this type of post-modernism gone wrong is the board game on PlayStation. Pinball is not far behind. So what about pool? Well, maybe we'll give it the benefit of the doubt and say that perhaps it has a place within videogames.

Having said that, *Pool Hustler* is not the game that should be flying the banner for it. It replicates the sport quite nicely but at the same time fails to generate any excitement. There aren't enough options to make contests truly interesting. While graphically it may do the job, and the control system is fast and simple to use, you just get bored of the stale, slow and repetitive nature of the gameplay.

Sorry, but when it comes to sports on the PlayStation this shouldn't see the colour of your money in our opinion. There may be a place for pool, but this version doesn't fight the battle well enough.

a-z of sport a-z of sport a-z of sport a-z of sport

**Pool Shark**

Style: Pool sim



Given that virtual pool can never be real pool, and given that this leads to more 'buts' regarding the game than an overflowing ashtray, *Pool Shark* is a splendid title.

While not able to recreate the real dexterity required it manages to successfully manufacture angle, pace, position and tactics better than we've seen displayed in any similar titles. *Pool Shark* is a pretty tidy sim. Pot on, in fact.

**Jonah Lomu Rugby**

Style: Rugby sim



The first rugby sim for the PlayStation, *Jonah Lomu*, may not be as spectacular as the latest generation of soccer efforts, for example, but it's still a great little game. It might even convince some unbelievers that rolling around in the mud isn't farical.

Rugby Union is, of course, a ridiculous game. All credit, therefore, goes to Rage as its months of live-action capture have obviously paid off: the players stand, run and pile into each other convincingly, and despite low-level sprite graphics, it all looks very smart and moves very smoothly.

Jonah plays well, too and although beginners can expect to be pulverised, once the first whistle sounds you'll find yourself in the middle of a maul, whether you know what you're doing or not.

The key to sim success is making it easy – but not that easy, and *Jonah*'s got it about right. Early games turn out to be dire slogs, but after some practise it becomes easier to express yourself.

Part of *Jonah*'s quality lies in the clever way the control system works. In each type of play the buttons have slightly different functions. While they take a bit of getting used to, you'll wonder how you'd done without them.

Jonah's only problem is that it's too nice. From the first whistle the players crunch together with gusto, but there are no flying fists, high tackles, send-offs or injuries.

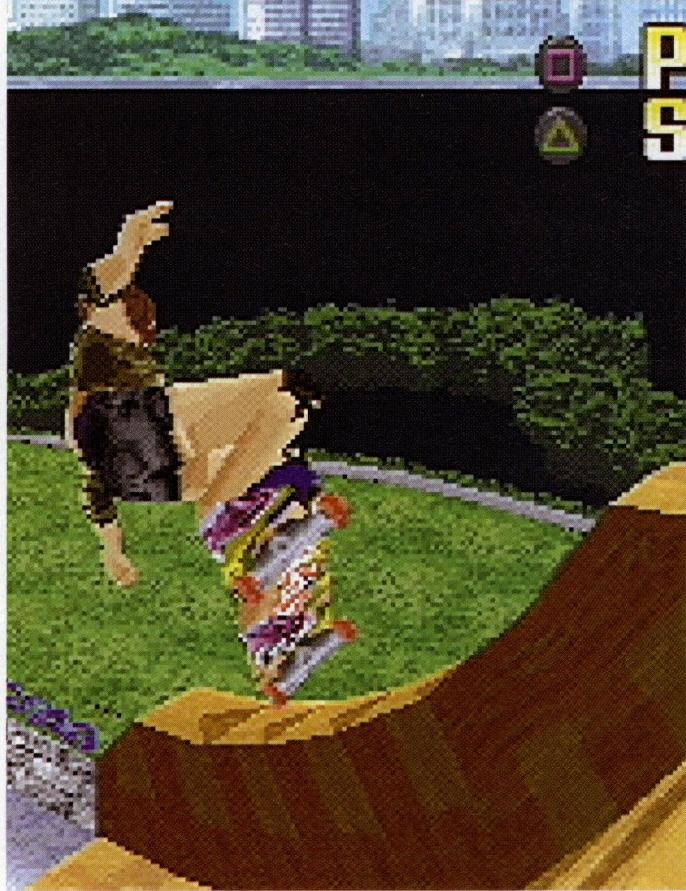
Dig in Push
Move ball
There are no flying fists, high tackles, send offs or injuries

And if you're going to quibble, there's no singing either. The grunts, thumps and groans as flesh meets flesh are muffled and the crowds seem too distant.

Still, you get all the international teams, grounds and camera angles you expect from a sporting sim plus it's accessible and easy to use. And among other things you're also treated to commentary from the Voice of Rugby, Bill McLaren, as well as expert analysis from Bill Beaumont. They don't say a lot but quantity is no substitute for quality when it comes to cheese.

Jonah Lomu Rugby is an excellent first try (groan) at bringing rugby to the PlayStation. But seriously, rugby fans will probably be thinking, 'About time too', and indeed they should be the first to join the scrum when it reaches the shops. It's pretty fucking good.





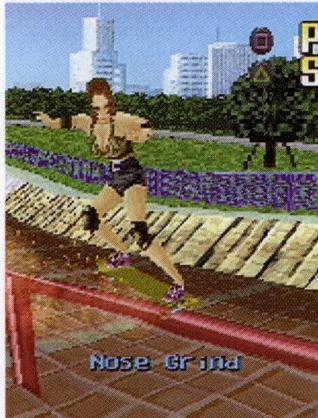
Street Sk8ter

Style: Skateboard sim



Some genres seem to have been waiting years for a decent game. Flight sims, motorbike riders, future sports... Among the most deserving are that breed, the non-snowboarders. Who doesn't like caning it down the piste, pulling-off stalefishes and 1080s until their frost-bitten toes snap off? We know we do. But substitute snow flakes for *Blade Runner*-esque street courses and what do you get? *Streak*, *Psybadet*. Maybe, if you're really lucky, a bit of *ESPN: Extreme Sports*. This is why PSM gets down on our kneepads to adore *Street Sk8ter*, the first title to try and make skateboarding into a proper game, not just a novelty item.

It's certainly not going to win any friends on looks alone. Rough, grungey, scrappy are some of the adjectives that come to mind. The tracks are garish, mixing purple ramps with chevroned billboards, neon signs next to yellow brick walls. Once you start boarding, the true character of the courses is revealed with ledges and rails, water hazards, walls of death and, of course, ramps. Stunts are pulled off by two simple button presses, first to jump and then a press with the D-Pad to select the flavour you desire. To beat any of the three tracks you'll need to both score heavily with a range of different tricks and achieve a decent time. Balancing speed and point-scoring is crucial.



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Tricks seem scarce initially, with just the odd grab or flip to be had when you take to the air. But as you beat each track you not only get the chance to upgrade your skater's stats but your skill level also goes up, enabling you to pull-off more complex aerial manoeuvres. The one niggle with this system is that without separate buttons for spins, flips or grabs it limits your creativity – instead the variety comes from moves changing according to your height and air speed. Incidentally, the lack of a 'sharp turn' button can be annoying as your boarders have such a large turning circle.

Rather than technical failings, what hinders *Street Sk8ter* is its lack of tracks. Just the three street courses (with mirror versions) plus Half-pipe, Bowl and Big Air won't make you drool with delight. It is fun, addictive, tough and involving but it leaves you wanting more.



Thrasher Skate & Destroy

Style: Skateboard sim



You can't talk about a skate game without referring to *Tony Hawk's Skateboarding* – the best on PlayStation so far. This unashamed arcade game made the impossible possible, the ollie obtainable and the rocket reachable. But maybe there's more? Maybe that game is *Thrasher Skate & Destroy*.

The gameplay in *Thrasher* is standard – take a skater through each level, scoring points for a trick within a time limit. To complete a level you have to escape from a cop. Progress earns you sponsorship and you can become the best skater in history – or something like that. If you want originality try the Two-Player Mode where skaters battle it out for the best accident.

But the test is what the skating feels like. This game was made by

skaters for skaters; a simulation approach. This means it takes a lot of practise to perform any stunts.

Spend any amount of time with it and you'll soon be pulling off wall grinds, varials and stalefishes, with ease. The icing on the cake is the '80s soundtrack. We're not talking *Flock Of Seagulls*, but music from the street (man). Cuts from Public Enemy, The Sugarhill Gang and Grandmaster Flash give *Thrasher* a unique old-skool atmosphere.

While *Thrasher* is excellent, it does fall short of perfection. The controls can be twitchy and the camera angles can make landing tricks difficult. However, *Thrasher* is a test of manual dexterity and

incredibly cool to play.

**This game
was made by
skaters for skaters**



A-Z OF SPORT



Tony Hawk's Skateboarding

Style: Skateboarding arcade game



Let's get this out in the open right now, *Tony Hawk's Skateboarding* is sick, though not in the medical sense of the word. In the argot of Californian skater dudes 'sick' has superseded 'rad' as the superlative of choice. Remember that when you're playing *Tony Hawk's Skateboarding*, because the boards you get to ride are sick, the ramps you rock are sick, the level designs are sick and the gameplay is sick, nay downright infectious.

With one gnarly kick *Tony Hawk's Skateboarding* has ollied its way into the sports sim genre and injected it with a new lease of life. But why all the fuss over what is, after all, just another skateboarding game? Well, listen up – you get to

be the coolest skater in the history of the sport, as well as being able to choose from eight other boarders on the professional circuit. You can pick your deck, trucks and wheels; and pulling off the silliest, craziest manoeuvres is easy, heart-stoppingly exciting and goddam satisfying, too. Fact: you will believe a man can fly!

Cool Boarders 3 was good, right? Well imagine a street-based game with more variety, better graphics and gameplay, and a proper block-rocking soundtrack. Yep, that's exactly what *Tony Hawk's Skateboarding* is like. From the first level you just know you've bought into something special. After selecting your skater, deck, trucks



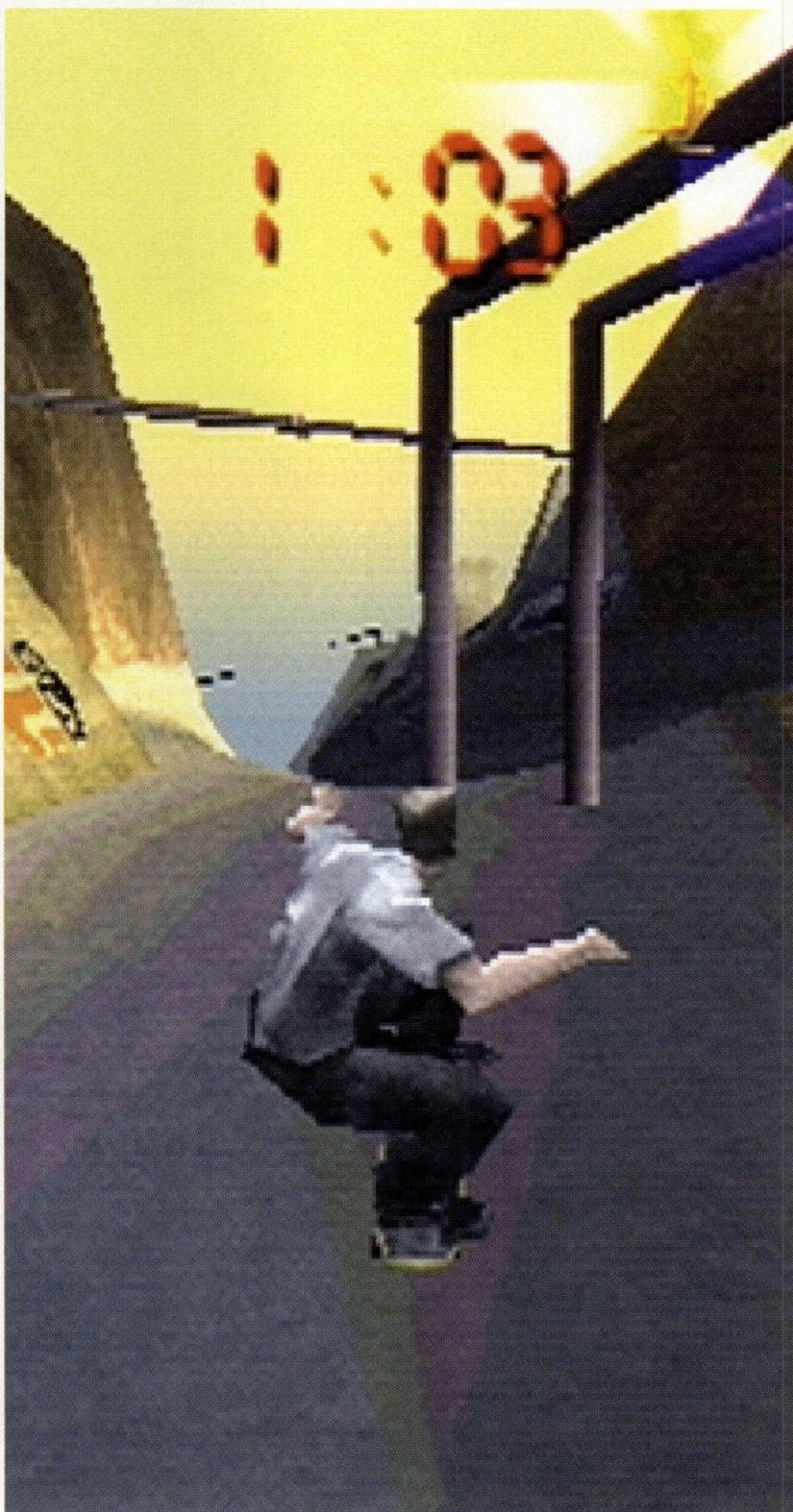
and wheels, you're transported to the warehouse – a training level where you pick up the basic controls and, hopefully, master some phat moves. There are loads of them too. Pulling them off successfully earns you points and, as in *Cool Boarders*, ripping combos will get you even higher scores. The basic aim of each level is to gain videos. You can do this by clocking up high scores and by completing basic – but not necessarily easy tasks. For example, in one level you earn a video by grinding five picnic tables. Bag yourself enough videos and you unlock the next level, or get better equipment. One of the best things about *Tony Hawk's* is its steady learning curve. Rocking

tricks can be a little daunting at first and there are just so many of them for you to tackle, but after your first few rides you soon settle into the control system. All you really have to worry about is steering your board and hitting the right buttons at the right time.

It's not completely unforgiving, though – and this is where it really excels as a sports game. Time your moves wrong or come down on a stray obstacle and you'll hurtle off your board, landing with a bloody crunch on the concrete. You see, *Tony Hawk's Skateboarding* has that elusive X factor by the bucket load – realism. The way the skaters move when on their boards, in the air or grinding down banisters is



SKATEBOARD



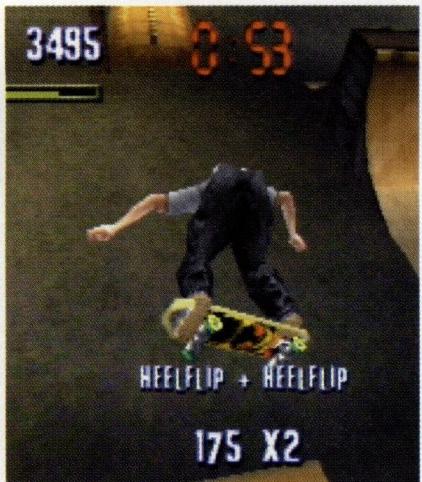
**One of the best things
is the game's steady
learning curve**

ass-crazy-fresh-monkey-doo-doo. It's not just a sports sim, it's a way of life. Even if you're not familiar with the moves and jargon of skating, you'll find nipping about, rocking daring tricks so much fun you'll be running home after those long, hard days for all-night skating sessions. And if you are a skater, you're bound to love it for the way it has captured the essence of this daring and rewarding urban game. Um, is this where we say 'dude' again?

raw street-poetry in motion. This is the real deal.

But wait, there's more. Besides the street-based levels, once you've nabbed enough videos you also get to flex your skills in competitions. You have three heats in which to impress the judges. Points are awarded for performing the best combos and for variety, so sticking to one ramp and pulling off the same old move won't curry favour with the judges. Winning your first medal, even if it's only bronze, is the greatest feeling and unlocks even more levels and bonuses.

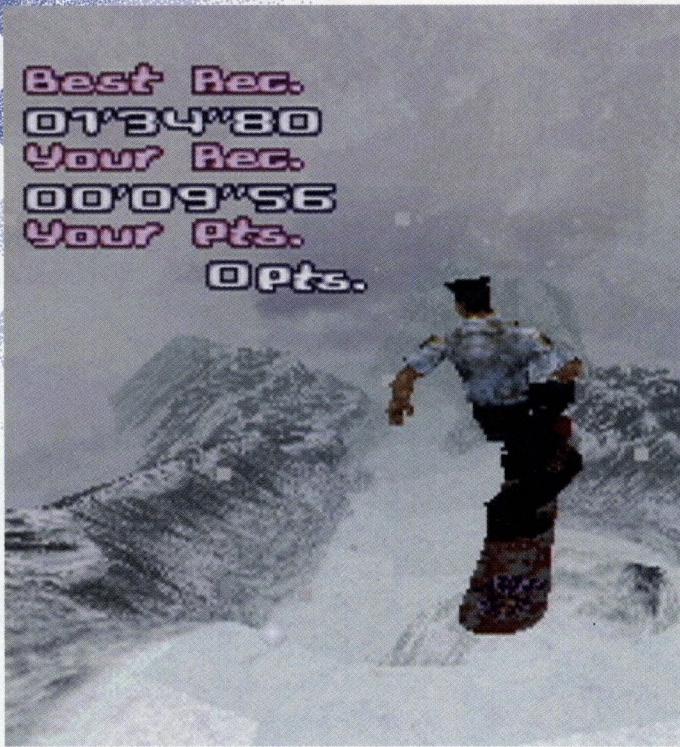
Tony Hawk's Skateboarding has it all. This game is so good it warrants extraneous use of words like phat, dope, ill, gonzo, and fly-



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Best Rec.
01'34"80
Your Rec.
00'09"56
Your Pts.
0pts.



Trick'n Snowboarder

Style: Snowboarding sim



Snowboarders are slowly but surely taking over the world. Indeed, if any flakes fall in your local park this coming winter, you can be sure that somebody in a Goretex jacket will immediately appear and attempt an indy nosebone or somesuch. These days, there are even slopes in Japan, the mountains in the north being on the same latitude line as Oregon in the United States. How does PSM know such minutiae? It's just one snippet of trivia offered up by Gale Parker, in-game coach of *Trick'n Snowboarder*.

Trick'n Snowboarder is yet another snowboarding game that ticks all the required boxes. The boards display brand names; there is a trendy soundtrack and much use of 'gnarly board talk'. However, you may have noticed from the pre-release hype that *Trick'n Snowboarder* harbours three hidden characters from a certain other Capcom series, *Resident Evil*. As you might have guessed, guiding Resi's hapless zombie cop down the piste is a laugh, but you can't help feeling that Leon and Claire are rather above all this larking around. They are heroes after all, and asking Claire to perform a 360° back-flip feels a bit asking the Queen Mum to take part in a celebrity TV gameshow. Gimmicks

aside though, is this truly 'rad' or just 'trad'?

Well, yes, it's a well-packaged, good-looking, highly-playable game. Scenario mode places you under the knowledgeable gaze of the aforementioned Gale Parker, who won't ever reward you with a smile for your efforts, but will escort you to the world's finest snowboarding venues. On each course you are 'filmed' at specific jump points, where you must pull the required tricks using the basic but effective combo method. As with all the best Story modes, you learn as you progress. Occasionally, a chirpy caricature will lay down a wager (announced with the legend "Here comes a new challenger!"). By scoring a more impressive trick at a particular jump, for example, points will be added to your boarder's speed, skill and balance ratings. Courses are designed without excessive novelty, although you will be asked to leap over a speeding train and dodge the All Blacks rugby team in New Zealand. Half-pipe and slalom courses provide more traditional variety.

Trick'n Snowboarder doesn't leap out at you from the ever-increasing snow-capped mountain of boarding games already available but should still help pass the winter nights – or any nights, come to that.



Cool Boarders 2

Style: Snowboarding sim



When the decision was being made over what sport to recreate on PlayStation, snowboarding was probably a long way down the list. Squeezing the thrills of any sport into a videogame is tricky – how can dabbing an X-button ever hope to replicate the half volley? And, unlike soccer, how are many of us supposed to know if this sim is anywhere close to the raw deal? Of course, your pro boarder could spot whether that digital fakie to frontside melancholy is authentic, but the chance of Joe Public being able to catch such subtleties is limited. A sports sim now out of the window, it looks like *Cool Boarders 2* is going to have to cut it as a full-on arcade game, then.

And it does. Those who've played SCE's lacklustre original might not believe it. But while the second instalment is still about strapping a deathplank to your feet

while attempting to avoid icy oblivion, but UEP's changes have given *Cool Boarders 2* the depth the original lacked and opened up fresh levels or gameplay.

Everything is different. Once past the FMV sequence (puffa jackets, snow, grunge etc), the menu should warm the cockles when you see the five variants on offer – Competition, Freestyle, Big Air, Half-pipe and Board Park. Each offers a distinct blend of downhill racing and aerial tricks. Now you can pull indy grabs and stalefishes in a Half-pipe or during Big Air, over a selection of three stadium-style jumps. Each ramp offers a different amount of air time but the tricks depend on your joypad finesse. Suitable tricky stuff and with the best moves requiring finger-flexing skills – the perfect feature for those requiring a tougher learning curve.

A 'tutorial' is available in the Master option of Big Air where you must execute the moves the screen asks of you Simple Simon-style. *Cool Boarders 2*'s learning curve is two parts frustrating to one part rewarding – AKA perfect.

But perseverance pays off when you get action replays from a zillion camera angles. Each run is replayed TV-style, the camera following your boarder as he/she soars in the clouds. Perfect wish

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Wish fulfilment for those too gutless to attempt the real thing

SECT1 0' 29" 960
SECT2 0' 16" 240
SECT3 0' 35" 120
TOTAL TRICK

239 PTS

SNOWBOARDING



fulfilment for those too gutless to attempt the real thing. But it's also the 'best' example of what is possibly *Cool Boarders 2*'s only glitch – the graphics. It's not that they're terrible. Indeed, each of the four boarders (Yaggi, Cindy, Jin and Irin) can be altered in the fashion department and whether you opt for Alpine, Freestyle or All-round, each board not only has a wide range of designs but each can be altered and saved in the Board Editor mode. Fine details all – and duly matched by the alpine skylines found in the downhill options. The 10 courses scattered throughout offer distant tundra, dappled skylines and (obstructive) trees. All of them evocative but all of them glitchy, frames flickering as you steam downhill. A sacrifice for speed and fresh options? Maybe, but one thing that stops *Cool Boarders 2* from edging the 5/5 it honestly could have earned itself.

But technical hitches aside, the thing plays like a dream. Those aforementioned tricks' options are sublimely satisfying but, for the more competitive-minded, the Competition and Freestyle sections are a must. Take on the best in Competition mode, climbing up the leaderboards as you alternate between jump and downhill, your times and tricks turned into points at the end of each stage. Prefer to race against the clock with the option of a *Micro Machines*-style 'shadow' opponent? Try the One Player Freestyle mode, choosing tracks you've conquered in Competition mode before trying another one of *Cool Boarders 2*'s superb additions – a split-screen Two Player mode. Wantonly addictive stuff and with all manner of courses, boards, soundtracks and opponents, varied enough to keep you coming back for more.



Big Air

Style: Arcade snowboarding ★★

Had this been a barber sim called *Big Hair* it would have been better than this rubbish. It's the kind of game that will sit on your shelf gathering dust for years to come unless you actually manage to swap it with someone while they're under the influence of drugs. The graphics

Had it been a barber sim called *Big Hair* it would have been better

are uncomfortably rough and the gameplay has spoiled and unresponsive controls. As for the game's lifespan, it just depends on your boredom threshold.



a-z of sport a-z of sport

Chill

Style: Snowboard sim ★★★

A cool name, an average game. A proficient snowboarding simulation it just lacks anything innovative to set it apart from the increasing competition. Fairly smooth graphics, but a limited gameplay.

MTV Snowboarding

Style: Snowboard sim ★★★

All snowboarding features present, but not necessarily correct, this manages to be less than the sum of its parts. Far from stunning-but-functional graphics, it has just been content to clone other games rather than create its own feel. A great premise but the resulting game is way too easy to last any length of time. More of a small distraction than anything else.

X-Games Pro Boarders

Style: Snowboard sim ★★★

Puts across the sport's cool image well, but the superficial gameplay lets it down. The lack of depth is prevalent in all snowboarding games, but this is particularly repetitive. Fun to be had in multi-player mode at least.

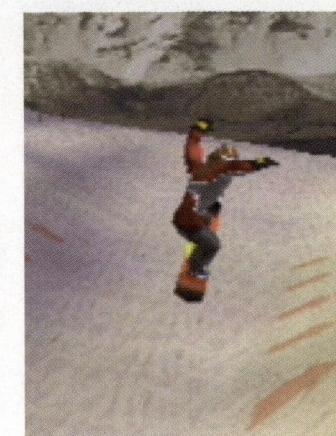
But when all's said and done, the Downhill is just another racing game, so head to Board Park for more tricks and leaps – this time with no time limit, and all manner of logs, pipes, fences, ramps and half-buried trucks to leap off, over and, ahem, through. The fun of Board Park makes it the closest thing to a first day on the piste you'll get without the bruised arse. Combine such mucking about with Competition's arcade racing rush plus the *Track & Field*-like skills needed to conquer the Half-pipe and UEP has transformed *Cool Boarders* from half a game to nigh on three. It's not Christmas, so who could have believed such a miracle could happen?

a-z of sport a-z of sport

Phat Air Extreme

Style: Snowboard sim ★★

A pale imitation of the *Cool Boarders* series this lacks the smooth intuitive feel of some of its peers. The graphics are blurred and pixillated, and the gameplay too jerky and disjointed to provide real satisfaction. There's a certain amount of fun to be had, but the control system is too weak for it to be a classic. To use the trendy snowboarding vernacular, this would be a fakie.



A-Z OF SPORT

A-Z OF SPORT

**ISS Pro '98**

Style: Soccer sim ★★★★☆

While EA has been busy with the *FIFA* series of soccer games, its Japanese rival, Konami, has quietly marshalled its resources. Super visuals, fluid animation and considered gameplay marked Konami's first *ISS Pro* title a classic. However, during the close season, the soothsayers suggested that EA's *World Cup '98* became the definitive PlayStation soccer sim. Not any more, sport...

Although *World Cup '98* serves notice of its intent with flawless presentation and a splendid intro sequence, *ISS '98* panders not to such sleeve-tugging finery. Drop in the disc and before you know it, veteran BBC commentator Tony Gubba is on the mike. You can't beat the TV doyens of soccer rattling on. It might get repetitive, but it's much better than a strangled yelp, or a gruff grunt from players on the pitch.

Those familiar with the original *ISS Pro* will feel comfortable here.



The players are big, chunky fellows, though more rounded than their polygon forebears. At first glance, the visuals don't seem a great advance, and it's only when you play the two back to back that you realise how much they've been improved upon. The strip detail is incredible and the crowd and stadia are more lifelike than before.

The animation has also been powdered off to a shine. The player movement is the most realistic yet. Their limbs move rather too quickly, but on the slow motion replay the movement is spot on. Here, when the players are running with the ball, it looks like it's actually rolling on the grass. *ISS Pro '98* has a better frame rate and a smoother, more realistic feel to it.

Once again, the game features international teams and Konami has used almost-real player names. Nonetheless, the look of some of the star names have been recreated by the programmers. This can be a useful pointer because each of the players and teams are rated on speed, passing, shooting etc. So if you spot Ronaldo making a break, you know it's worth giving him the ball. Konami has also included a player edit facility, which enables you to pop in real names, should you deem it necessary.

But enough of the niceties. What makes *ISS Pro '98* such a great game is its simplicity. There are very

Those familiar with the original *ISS Pro* will feel comfortable here

a-z of sport a-z of sport



few things you need to know to get started – a pass-to-feet option works a treat plus you can play long and through balls. Add in the shooting, heading, tackling and speed-up feature and you've just about cracked it. But not quite...

Within this simple premise of a few buttons, is an incredible range of tactical nuances. There are over a dozen formations and an option to press players into a particular third of the pitch. It's a game that soccer aficionados will love because you can build real moves in such a realistic fashion. If you know anything about soccer, you should be able to create more effective play than someone who doesn't.

Scoring goals isn't arbitrary. You have to work openings and when you register, you know how you did it. This may seem obvious, but those who've played *World Cup '98* will have banged in many a 25-yarder and felt a tad guilty. You won't get away with speculative efforts here. Not that you can't score spectacular goals with headers and scissor kicks.

Many who deride *ISS Pro*, do so because it seems slow in comparison with other soccer games. It's a legitimate point, though *ISS* defenders would cite its considered gameplay in response.



Konami has introduced a game speed option, but inevitably, you whack it up to maximum for the two-player games. When competing on your lonesome, you may wish to start at a slower pace, because this is more difficult in the one-player mode than *World Cup '98*. Nonetheless, *ISS Pro '98* ups the pace from last year's model.

Untidy aspects? Not many. The ball-being-kicked sound effect is horrific. And some of the strips clash rather too closely for comfort. However, when you play as Holland you get a brass band accompaniment, and we like that. It's the best soccer game yet.



LiberoGrande

Style: First person soccer sim

★★★★★

Every winter, it's the same with half-a-dozen soccer sequels hitting the PlayStation. *FIFA '99*, *Actua Soccer 3*, *World League Soccer '99*. Granted, all come freshly tweaked, but to generalise wildly, it's the same old same old.

Enter *LiberoGrande*. Namco might not inspire confidence in soccer fans, but perhaps that's what was needed. Rather than a polygonal photocopy of *FIFA*, Namco has created a first-person soccer sim. No changing players, no TV camera angles – just one player in the action. Let us explain.

Fact: chances are you'll hate *LiberoGrande*. You will choose your striker from the *ISS*-style roster, you will chase the ball like a headless chicken and you will play like Southampton – ie, naffly. This is because you will still be playing Soccer: The Videogame.

That means no pot shots from sweet spots or those box-to-box 80-yard dribbles. Nope, you must set up your moves and finish them. Tracking players with the on-screen radar forces you to spread the ball wide as you leg it into the box to receive your team-mate's cross. If

To play
LiberoGrande you
must play Soccer:

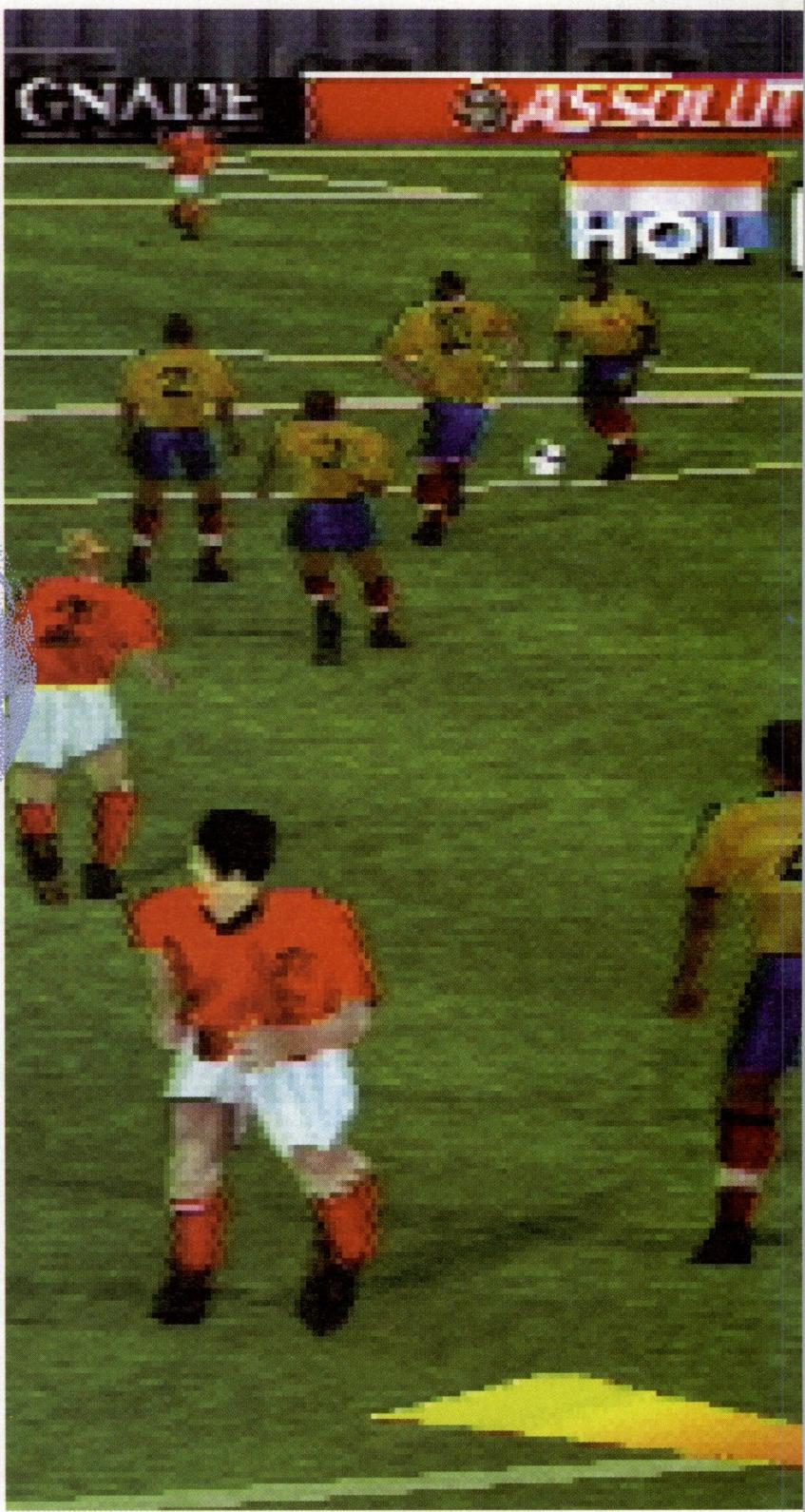
The Game

you can't make it into the box due to having to defend a corner, then order your centre-forward to make the shot.

Players can shoot, pass and tackle with the dab of a button, with more sophisticated moves possible. While the controls might seem sluggish, a half-time spent studying the manual will yield much in the way of bicycle kicks and stepover feints. You can control your CPU players, making them tackle, shoot and pass to you.

Yet soccer is a team game and playing against a pal will bring about many midfield tussles but the real treat is being on the same side. Take turns setting each other up or assign yourselves defensive and attacking roles – the feeling of teamwork is palpable.

Reservations? The music is cack and the AI and controls are somewhat sluggish. It compares more to Liverpool than Manchester United – stylish, dodgy at the back but with enough flair to win the hearts of neutral and purist alike.





This Is Soccer

Style: Soccer sim



So what's Sony's goal? EA's *FIFA* series is not only dominant and blessed with a large development team and budget, but has also been perfected over the last few years. As Eidos, Silicon Dreams and now Sony has proved, you just can't beat it at its own game.

The problem with *This Is Soccer* is that it can't be seen to be copying *FIFA*, which means that if you've played *FIFA* before then you're going to find this a bit weird. Even several hours and an aching, bruised thumb later – when you've got the hang of the controls – you're still shouting at your telly and Sony for some dumb decisions. Why does the knock-forward control clash with the sprint button? Surely you may want to do both at once. Why does the one-touch system work intermittently? Is it because



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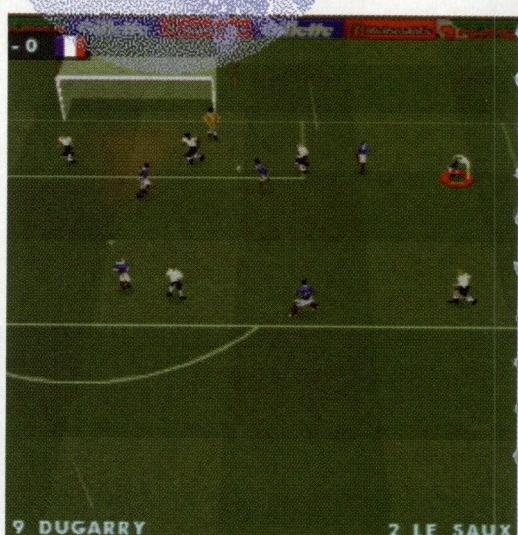


Even after several hours you're still shouting at your telly and Sony for some dumb decisions

the one-two control is such a great way to cut through the defence that 50 per cent of the time the return pass is useless? Why don't the sliding tackles slide?

Eight hours into playing *This Is Soccer*, it was staring at the wrong end of the scoring chart. Four days later, it had climbed into a three out of five position as stunning goals proved that you could get the hang of the control system. But then the problems raised their heads again. Suspect AI had players ignoring the ball; opting to play aggressively or defensively means they virtually always cross the halfway line or don't bother at all; and during the league, AI champs Chelsea managed to win all 19 of their matches – what chance does that give the glorious Arsenal, finishing second after only drawing three games?

At the end of the day, *This Is Soccer* has 30,000 properly-named players, facial likenesses, leagues and cup competitions for teams in every continent... There's plenty to play for, but is this soccer?





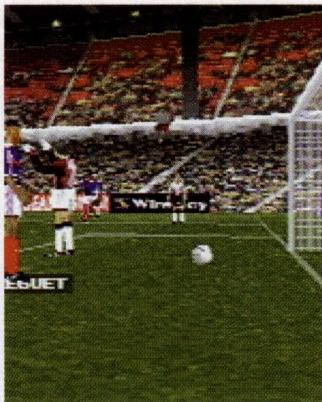
Actua Soccer 3

Style: Soccer sim



Actua Soccer might have been one of the first games into the crowded soccer market but it's definitely been left behind by the likes of *FIFA* and *ISS Pro*. The players now look stiff and awkward, and their movements are stilted. The game still has plenty of

options but the gameplay is showing its age, and has none of the flair of the real game. It lacks a wide range of moves and doesn't truly represent the flowing nature of the sport. Once a major player this is now an old has-been forced to play in the lower leagues.



Michael Owen WLS '99

Style: Soccer sim



A soccer game with depth for those that persevere, but the intricate button combos mean that play is slightly inaccessible. Graphically fairly basic as well, with the players animated so that they look like they have cramp when they run.

VIVA Soccer

Style: Soccer sim



A game stuffed with tradition and nostalgia, but unfortunately not bursting at the seams with gameplay. Graphically it looks very good with well-designed players and nice movement.

Great camera angles add to the effect. The game is also easy to start playing and has a huge database of stats. Fans of the sport will immediately be hooked. Whether they stay hooked is a matter for debate.

Unlike *Michael Owen*, *Viva Soccer* is just too simple in terms of control. Not enough goes on to add variety to the play.

With so many other soccer games on the market there really is no place for this game in Australia, especially because its one selling point was the nostalgia and tradition which was aimed purely at a British market.

Adidas Power Soccer '98

Style: Soccer sim



A disappointing and often infuriating game. This might not be the worst game on the PlayStation for soccer fans but it isn't far off either. If *ISS Pro* is Manchester United, then this is Wagga Wagga Reserves.

The players are blocky and use motion-capture in a totally uninspiring way, while the hit-and-hope gameplay is woefully outdated. There are plenty of tournaments to play and different

modes to explore, but there seems little reason to bother when the game itself isn't enjoyable enough.

Like many soccer games there is an ability to score wondrous volleys and long-distance pile drivers, which knock the goalkeeper into his own net, but unfortunately this just doesn't get the small things right such as passing and dribbling. And, despite the flash things being cool, you have to get the basics right first.

a-z of sport a-z

UEFA Champs League

Style: Soccer sim 

Much underrated soccer game that plays like a dream. Not quite up to ISS standards, but certainly able to play *FIFA* off the park. The players are odd looking but move very well, while the gameplay offers a strong mix of arcade gratification and depth. With instant appeal and a huge lifespan therefore, you can expect hours of pleasure from this little gem.

A strong mix of arcade gratification and depth of gameplay



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UEFA Striker

Style: Soccer sim



UEFA Striker is another soccer game that would be worth purchasing if no other soccer games existed. It has great animation – including some amazing stadiums – and the control system is simple and intuitive. It also has plenty of little extras like being able to play nostalgic old games in black and white. On the negative side, however, tackling is very difficult to master so you get the annoying

sight of players dribbling the length of the field with defenders and slipping and sliding in their wake. Good, but not great.

FIFA '99

Style: Soccer sim



Improving further on *World Cup '98*, this kept the *FIFA* ball rolling along nicely. As ever, the incredible animation and detail was present, together with plenty of league options and cups, and all the right players and teams, but this time the control system was more instinctive than ever. A myriad of fancy moves and simple passing makes this a real grower. Add in a Fatboy Slim soundtrack and you've got the biggest competitor to the soccer crown that sits proudly on the head of *ISS Pro '98*.



World Cup '98

Style: Soccer sim



A great version of the *FIFA* game that you might be able to pick up cheaply simply because of its outdated name. Great animation and fantastic playability make it worth playing this over and over.

A-Z OF SPORT

**Player Manager**

Style: Soccer management sim



The whole premise of soccer manager sims is a strange one and this page is sure to apply solely to our British readers. In fact, even then, just a small strange portion of them. Why on Earth you'd want to spend time shuffling players' names around a computer screen is baffling, but it's obviously an enjoyable pursuit when you're rugged up and trying to avoid those

cold winter nights up in the Northern Hemisphere. Over the years there has been a huge search to find the ultimate soccer management sim, but it's proved harder than trying to find a decent manager of the Aussie soccer side.

This was the very first version to hit the PlayStation and it was by far the worst. Ten out of ten for originality at the time, but only one out of 10 for success. Poorly designed and user-unfriendly, this is not an enjoyable experience even for lovers of the genre.

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Player Manager Season '98-'99

Style: Soccer management sim



Although slightly sluggish and with a lack of depth in terms of players' positions, this includes impressive match highlights that play out the games you have selected teams for, and also allows for a European Cup competition as well as the Premier League. On the negative side, however, it doesn't allow for international transfers, and given that all the exciting moves come from abroad these days that's a huge failing. Chelsea could not have signed George Weah for instance, Bradford could not have signed Cadette... the list is endless.

Ultimately this is a lightweight effort, and given that the target audience is deeply into the subject matter that simply isn't allowable.

Again, added to this lack of reality is a sluggish control system, which means decision making become stilted rather than an adrenaline rush of high-powered decision making. Fun, but not challenging enough.

Premier Manager '98

Style: Soccer management sim



Yet another missed opportunity to go to the top of the management league. This was deemed to have a vast array of stats and a huge database to build on with great animation for the match highlights. Unfortunately the whole thing lacked cohesion and was less than the sum of its parts. The graphics were average at best and actually managing a team was easier than it should have been.

Premier manager '99

Style: Soccer management sim



Better than the previous effort, but Gremlin still can't crack what should be a simple genre to master. The transfer from its highly successful PC game seems to be as difficult as ever on PlayStation. It's not terrible by any means, but the engine has now aged badly and the fact the game is still too easy is starting to work very badly against the whole thing. Relegation beckons for this tired management sim.

**FA Premier League Football Manager 2000**

Style: Soccer management sim



This looks more modern than most of its competitors, but lacks the depth and finesse of even the Premier Manager series. Easier to navigate than many of the older sims, but other options such as training and scouting are way too basic. Especially when you consider that these have become some of the most important aspects to real clubs in today's game of soccer. The menus look ugly but are fairly functional and one major plus is the

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Shallow and awkward to play

match highlights, which are of a strong quality. Ultimately the whole thing is shallow and awkward to play and lacks the longevity that you look for in a game of this sort.

Above everything, the most frustrating thing about the whole game is when your team takes the field. After all, the thought that you've put into picking a team and sorting the strategy, players then seem to behave far too randomly and you think 'what's the point?'

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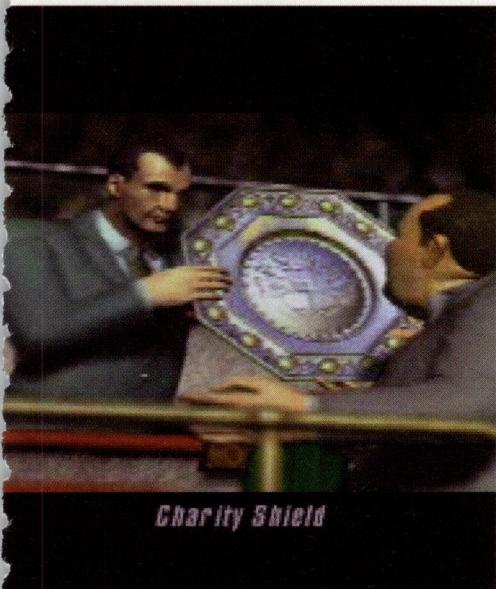
FA Manager

Style: Soccer management sim



The last of our soccer management games comes from the Tomb Raider people, and is as bad as that is brilliant. Far too text heavy, thus making it difficult to use, and with match highlights that look awful. For people who have a very small interest in soccer this is the sort of game that will put them off forever. Having said that, the game has attracted something of a cult following among hardcore fans of the sport. Whether it is the sadistic nature of British soccer fans who seem to almost enjoy losing season

after season, who can tell? One thing is for certain, amidst the pages and pages of text about players that nobody has ever heard of, and the strange formations that can be created, along with watching poorly animated match highlights a small band of PlayStation fans gain immense pleasure from these strange games. If you're a massive soccer fan then we suggest you try one - LMA Manager - being by far the best. If nothing else it will improve your soccer knowledge more than reading books and magazines ever could. If you aren't a soccer fan then stay well away both from the games - and from the people that play them.



LMA Manager

Style: Soccer management sim

★★★★★

Here's a management sim that takes all the really talented bits from other sims and makes them work together in perfect harmony. Not only this, but it does so with the kind of panache that would make Gerard Houllier envious.

Most management games trip themselves up in the vital area of gameplay. They may be stuffed with stats, but manipulating this vast amount of information is hard work. Ugly nested menus must be trawled through, 'yes' and 'no' buttons clicked and loading times endured. These titles are the equivalent of racing games with a zillion cars and upgrades but a game engine that only allows you to drive them at 30kmh around a featureless track. *LMA*'s achievement isn't just that it looks prettier, but that it makes playing quick, easy and fun.

Codemasters knits together the many menu screens very simply. The shoulder buttons let you flick between menus, while the D-pad and standard buttons let you select and change players and options.



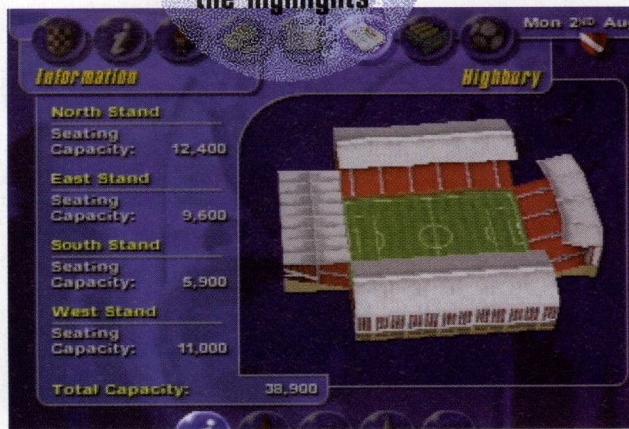
LMA's most revolutionary feature, though, is the option to watch each match in real-time. The action may be speeded-up so that games last about five minutes, but every pass, tackle and shot that gets recorded in readiness for the final stats occurs right in front of you. The real advantage is that you can see who's doing what. You can suspend play at any time and cue-up a sub or tactical change from the touchline. Meanwhile, clever details like a glowing ball trail and a text-commentary window ensure that you can follow every twist and turn – even if the players are tiny.

The cherry on top of this soccer sundae is the highlights. Many

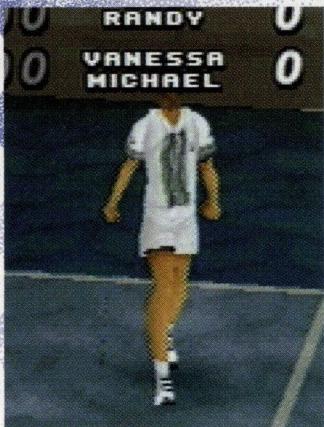
management vets will turn these off but they're the ones who'll be missing out. Not only do you get great commentary, the animation is superb and because it takes data direct from the in-game screen, it's what really happened.

Yet again Codemasters has produced a world-beater. Accessible, yet in-depth. Flash, but with a backbone of no-nonsense gameplay. *LMA Manager* is everything a soccer management game should be.

**The cherry on this
soccer sundae is
the highlights**



A-Z OF SPORT

**Actua Tennis**

Style: Tennis sim



Just when we thought tennis had come a long way since the days of two white bars and a square blip, Gremlin went and released this. Not even in the same league as its soccer and golf games, *Actua Tennis* is a clumsy and laughable attempt to replicate the sport.

The sprites are reasonable if a little unconvincing in their movement, and there are loads of in-game options. Unfortunately though, the time lag between playing a shot and hitting the ball is such that the premise upon which the videogame is based is ruined. In *Smash Court*, the fun comes from the long rallies you can get going because of the intuitive control system, in this however the action is stilted and broken up by needless errors in play. Certainly the basics are here if they do a follow up but the faults needed to be ironed out to create a game we love.

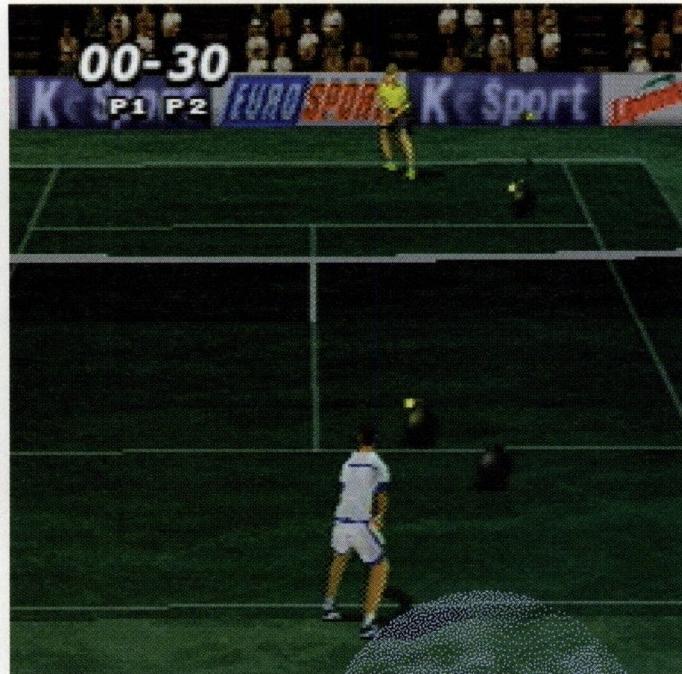
All Star Tennis

Style: Tennis sim



Released two months after *Actua Tennis* for the Christmas of 1998, this was a vast improvement and fell somewhere between *Actua* and *Namco Smash Court*. Not quite the addictive playability of *Smash Court*, but certainly with improved graphics and feel over its rival *Actua*.

Shock horror, this was a tennis game that looked good and played pretty well too. With great-looking courts and a myriad of options the game had longevity as well. It also boasts a full roster of real tennis stars to tinker with. Not a fantastic game in one-player mode admittedly, but there's certainly plenty of fun to be had with a multitap and some friends.

**Power Serve Tennis**

Style: Tennis sim



Only the world's greatest tennis fan need apply here, and even then we'd warn against it. The players are odd sculptured-looking polygon people and they move like robots. The gameplay itself is terrible and it can only be forgiven because it was one of the first ever PlayStation tennis games. Oh, and listen out for the music – it's appalling!

Break Point

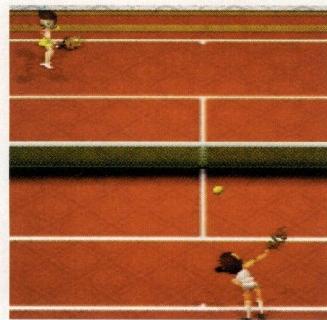
Style: Tennis sim



A vastly underrated tennis game that even gives *Smash Court* a run for its money. Although it lacks the real players, it has just about everything else. It had good-looking and authentic venues, despite lacking a licence for true world courts. The players are nicely motion captured and the sound effects realistic. Importantly, though, there is a great depth to the

Give it time and you'll be totally addicted

a-z of sport a-z of sport a-z of sport a-z of sport

**Davis Cup Tennis**

Style: Tennis sim



This is a very smartly put together tennis game, with great graphics and bags of realism. The sound is even good. In fact, until you actually sit down to play a game, there'd be no way of telling quite how bad this really is. Worth looking at, but that's about all.

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Namco Smash Court Tennis

Style: Arcade tennis



Okay, so it doesn't look like tennis. It has no real players. And not only does it not have real venues, but the venues it does have don't even look remotely like proper courts. Yet, you find us a better tennis game anywhere in the world (other than the more famous sequel, *Anna Kournikova's Smash Court Tennis*) and we'll beat ourselves about the

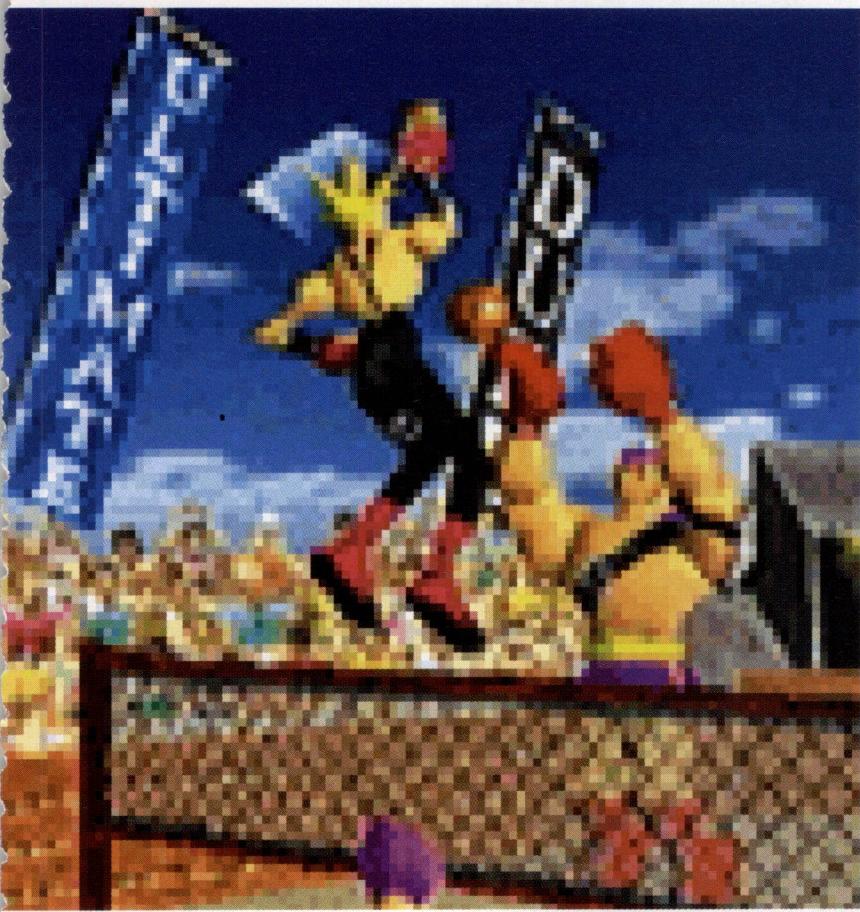
head and body with a tennis racquet. It's possibly the best two-player you can get on PlayStation and is totally addictive. You could even argue that, although it doesn't quite look the part, this is the best sports game ever made. Perhaps *Smash Court* more than any other game shows that get the gameplay right and nothing else matters.

**Tennis Arena**

Style: Tennis sim



A really surprising little tennis game. Beautifully animated, superbly imaginative and a worthy addition to the PlayStation tennis stable. Lacking a licence, but lacking very little else, it not only looks good but plays a great game too. Fully recommended.



V-ball

Style: Beach volleyball

★★★★★

With the full title *V-ball: Beach Volley Heroes*, this should have been a ridiculous idea that was laughed out of the office. Instead it turned into an ironic favourite that we all became addicted to.

The graphics are low res and very cartoonish, and the gameplay is fairly one-dimensional, even so it's a simple and intuitive game to pick up, full of good humour and lots of fun. A tournament of this with a few mates can be one of the funniest and most exciting PlayStation experiences you'll ever have. Like *Smash Court Tennis*, never judge a game by its graphics.



Nagano Winter Olympics

Style: Winter sports sim

★★★

After the highly addictive Konami sports fest which was *International Track and Field*, when it announced a winter version, everybody expected another compulsive installment of button-bashing. This then was a huge letdown.

The same rules apply as with the summer version, in other words you bash buttons until blisters appear on your fingers, but the fact that so many of the events are identical means that it lacks the variety of the previous incarnation. Alpine Slalom, Giant Slalom. Snowboarding and Alpine Super G for example. Call them what you want but they're just the same events in a different season. This is something you could cope with if they were all equally well executed, but unfortunately they aren't.

The visuals are jerky and the pace is excruciatingly slow. Most of these sports are meant to be graceful, but, in fact, look like you're a complete learner with a bad case of the shakes.

The plus point in all this is that there is nothing else quite like it. And if you're a massive fan of the Winter Olympics then you're going to get something out of this. At the time though there were concerns that this was rushed out for the upcoming Winter Olympics and as a result suffered on release. The fact that Konami has never re-released the game again under a different name however might indicate that this was as good as it was going to get. Either way, this is a game of 13 events and all of them are pretty dull, we're afraid.



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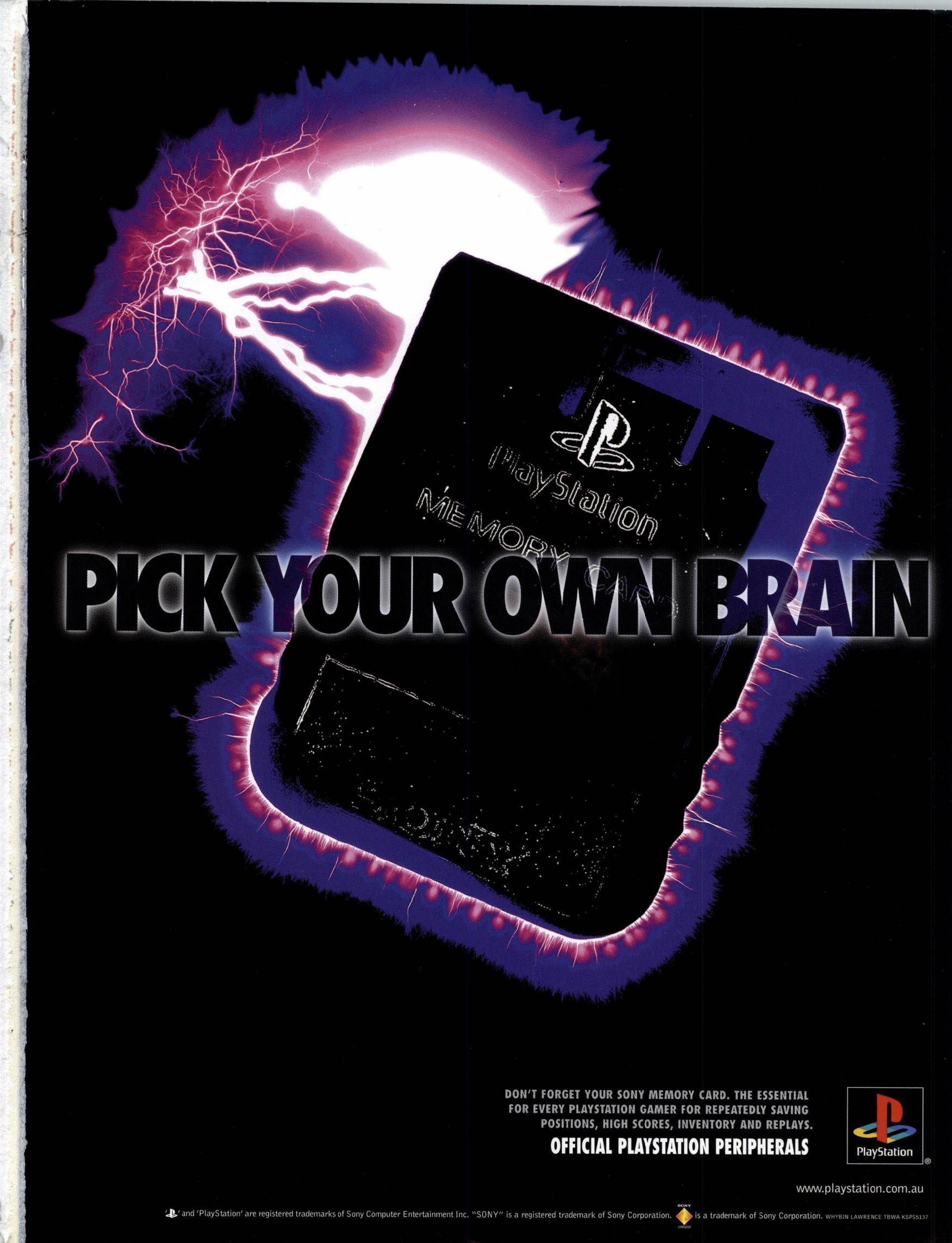
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